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ABSTRACT

This document reports how the Council of State Policy and Planning Agencies (CSPA) Academy process helped nine states develop workplace literacy initiatives involving their governors' offices, the Job Training Partnership Act system, and the educational system. The states were Florida, Idaho, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Missouri. An executive summary provides an economic rationale for the initiatives and describes project participants; the notion of workplace literacy; the CSPA Academy process; the accomplishments (four states designed comprehensive, integrated approaches to the problem; three states created special interagency projects or programs; and two states strengthened their interagency understanding of the problem and laid the groundwork for change); and the lessons learned from the project. Chapter 1 introduces the project. Chapter 2 frames the issues and presents the working partnerships needed to resolve them. Chapter 3 discusses the major steps in the policy development cycle and illustrates with specific examples how the states constructed their literacy policies and action plans. Chapter 4 presents an overall assessment of the results. Chapter 5 presents in detail each state's experience, process, and products as it moved through the academy. Six references appear. The appendix contains the names and addresses of state team members. (CML)

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ENHANCING LITERACY FOR JOBS AND PRODUCTIVITY ACADEMY FINAL REPORT

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements i

Foreword iii

Executive Summary v

Chapter One: Introduction 1

Chapter Two: Adult Literacy: A New Way of Thinking – A New Partnership . . 13

Chapter Three: From Ideas to Action Literacy Policy Development and Implementation 21

- Choosing the Team 23
- Conducting the Environmental Scan 24
- Defining the Problems and Opportunities 25
- Setting Policy Goals and Objectives 27
- Choosing Strategic Interventions 30
- Predicting Outcomes 32
- Planning for Action 33
- Taking Action 37

Chapter Four: Assessing Results 39

Chapter Five: State Experience 53

- The State of Florida 53
- The State of Idaho 59
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts 63
- The State of Michigan 70
- The State of Missouri 77
- The State of North Carolina 82
- The State of Tennessee 86
- The State of Utah 91
- The Commonwealth of Virginia 95

Footnotes 101

Appendix A – State Team Members 103

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Foreword

The United States is at a crossroads. The world economy is changing, and the American economy with it. World trade, new technologies, and global competition place new requirements on the workplace, and the workforce. The demands of the world economy are outpacing the skills of many Americans. This gap between the demands needed in the workplace and the skills resident in the workforce is growing larger by the day, and is reaching crisis proportions for many of our workers.

As America faces this crossroads, leaders in business, government, labor, and education can choose either to ignore the implications of the skills gap or find ways to mobilize public and private sector resources to close the gap and preserve our nation's economic vitality. It has become increasingly clear that a major component of any effective strategy to preserve America's economic vitality must entail helping our workforce obtain the literacy skills needed for full productivity.

The U.S. Department of Labor, in its responsibilities for implementing the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), plays a critical role with regard to the training needs of the existing workforce. Thus, when the Council of State Policy & Planning Agencies (CSPA) proposed to Labor Department officials an intensive "State Policy Academy on Enhancing Adult Literacy for Jobs and Productivity," the Department recognized a special opportunity to pursue this mission through intensive interaction with policy makers from nine selected states.

By agreeing to participate in the policy Academy, nine governors signalled their states' commitments to close the literacy skills gap. Governor-appointed teams of policymakers from Florida, Idaho, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia and my own state of Missouri – worked tirelessly to devise detailed and integrated strategies that fit the special needs and conditions for their states. Working with leading national experts and those from the Departments of Labor and Education and the CSPA, state teams were required to arrive at an understanding of the literacy problems in their states, to devise thoughtful and politically realistic means of attacking the problems, and to develop plans to harness public and private resources to bring their solutions to bear on the problems.

The teams were broadly representative of the many individuals and groups interested in literacy. Members of the Missouri team included individuals from business, libraries, the state literacy coalition, the governor's office, and state agencies dealing with vocational education, job training, and adult literacy. When the teams reported their results to me, I could tell that the academy process had been rigorous, thought provoking, practical, and relevant to state policy concerns.

This report reflects the depth of gubernatorial commitment to gearing up for literacy. It reveals the complexity of the problems each state team faced and how difficult they are to solve. It also shows that states can and will make a difference.

There are important lessons for all states in the following accounts: lessons on the sticky business of agreeing on the problem; lessons on the fine points of integrating services; lessons on the tough job of defining and measuring real outcomes. These lessons will be valuable to all policymakers.

On behalf of the participating states, I would like to thank the U.S. Department of Labor for supporting this effort with its financial and staff resources, and the U.S. Department of Education for their outstanding assistance to the academy.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as lead governor for this project, and commend to you the following report of our results.

GOVERNOR JOHN ASHCROFT
MISSOURI

Executive Summary

THE STAKES

The nation's economic resurgence depends on its workforce. To prosper, the United States must improve productivity, improve the dynamism of an aging workforce, reconcile the needs of workers and families, integrate Blacks and Hispanics fully into the workforce, and improve workers's education and skills.

This is no easy task. The mismatch between workers' skills and jobs is ever more pronounced. A gap is emerging between the relatively low education and skills of workers entering the labor force, many of whom are disadvantaged, and the advancing skill requirements of the new economy.

Leaders at the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education, after reviewing the facts, the trends, the resulting challenges, and the resources available at the federal and state levels, concluded that enhancing the literacy of working age adults is essential if the nation is to successfully meet the economic challenges it faces.

Deeply committed to building their economies and enhancing human potential, governors also linked workforce skills and economic productivity. In *Bringing Down the Barriers*, a National Governor's Association Report, the governors explored the relationship between welfare dependency and teen pregnancy, inadequate child care and medical services, employment and training services, and illiteracy.

The interests of the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education and the nation's governors merged in the Council of State Policy and Planning Agencies (CSPA) State Policy Academy on Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity. Over the past five years CSPA has refined this in-depth technical assistance process to help governors address pressing issues which cross agency and public/private sector boundaries. The U.S. Department of Labor decided to fund the CSPA Academy because Department leaders understood the stakes to be nothing less than continued economic prosperity and because they considered states the most appropriate arena for action.

This report describes how the CSPA Academy Process assisted nine states in investing in human potential. The literacy initiatives of these states show how the Governor's Office, the Job Training Partnership system, and the education system can work together to improve the employability of a state's workforce.

THE CONTEXT: THE JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT

The Job Training Partnership Act (PL 97-300 as amended by 99-570) provides a context for connecting literacy to employment. Passed in 1982, the law was designed to strengthen the ties between training and employment, particularly permanent employment in the private sector.

The early years of JTPA implementation laid the foundation for 1) private/public partnership in the design of training programs; 2) the recruitment into those programs of dependent or hard-to-reach populations; 3) public and private sector awareness that low basic skills was a significant barrier to successful employment for many individuals; and 4) results-oriented, publicly funded education and training services leading directly to employment outcomes.

Within the last four years Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) around the country have demonstrated success in connecting unemployed and disadvantaged individuals with permanent, private sector employment through basic skills training as well as traditional job training. The Department of Labor wished to translate these local successes into focused and pro-active state policy.

WORKFORCE LITERACY: A NEW WAY OF THINKING

Investing in workforce literacy requires a new way of thinking. Until recently a person was presumed literate if he or she could read and write at a specified grade level. While the designated grade level has changed during the last fifty years from fourth grade to eighth grade, the basic presumption of literacy at any grade level is being challenged. First, there are no guarantees that a person stamped "grade 8" will have the skills needed to function on the job and at home. Second, the skills needed for employment are changing rapidly and growing ever more complex. Literacy is more than decoding words. It is contextual – its definition is determined by the environment.

In this case, the environment is the labor market. The intended outcome of literacy investments is to enhance the employability of people. Literacy is viewed as a combination of skills. For example, skills in English as a second language enable an immigrant to take public transportation, to apply for and obtain an entry-level job; basic reading, writing, and computation competencies allow an unemployed worker to train for a specific occupation; oral and written communication skills enable a supervisor to direct others in a complex manufacturing operation; an employee with good reasoning skills successfully completes a task without close supervision; a worker leaving an obsolete job transfers what he or she knows to the new job environment.

Enhancing one's skills implies movement along a literacy continuum as opposed to achieving a fixed target such as a reading level. Policymakers can measure progress by determining whether movement along the continuum is occurring. The continuum offers a practical approach to measuring literacy levels, targeting programs and evaluating outcomes.

THE PARTNERS

Effective literacy programs require a strong partnership between state government, employers, traditional literacy providers, the education system, and the state's employment and training system – specifically, the Job Training Partnership (JTPA) system. To achieve the work-related outcomes, new literacy partnerships were developed by the Academy states. Key partners included:

Governors: As literacy partners the Governors contributed leadership, authority, and resources. High gubernatorial visibility raised public awareness and promoted the involvement of all stakeholders, including employers. Gubernatorial authority helped to ensure interagency collaboration and institutional change. The resources governors contributed ranged from considerable staff time and energy to significant general fund increases targeted to literacy efforts.

Employers: In addition to assuming strong, informal leadership roles on several Academy teams, employers also brought perspective and resources. The private sector offered a practical and outcome-oriented perspective to Academy states' literacy initiatives. Employers wanted to know what was going to change. They looked for cost-effective solutions. They supported collaborative interagency action. The business community also contributed significant resources to every state's literacy effort.

The JTPA/ Employment and Training System: JTPA partners actively participated on all Academy teams. They offered connections, expertise, resources, and leadership, but the most critical contribution to the literacy effort was the employment context. Many literacy providers had never connected their services to employment outcomes. They neither understood the perspective of employers nor the range of functional skills needed by disadvantaged individuals looking for work or advancement. JTPA team members strengthened the connection between literacy and employment on all Academy teams. They linked state efforts with Private Industry Councils and employers.

In addition, JTPA members provided invaluable information and expertise to their teams on demographic and economic trends, literacy/basic skills needs of the unemployed, workplace competencies, and accountability systems. In eight states, JTPA resources funded portions of the literacy action plans.

Adult Basic Education/Private Literacy Providers: Literacy program providers have a teaching methodology, an understanding of basic skills curriculum, and experience with the "student" of literacy services. Every Academy Team had representatives from adult education contributing knowledge and experience, commitment and follow-through. Literacy providers offered expertise on levels of literacy, expected standards of achievement, standard practices, and innovative approaches. They provided insight into the literacy network, the state and private funding systems, and the motivations and expectations of teachers and volunteers.

They shared information on how adults learn and the barriers to more effective learning. Private providers in particular understood how adults feel about their literacy skills or lack of skills and how they want to be treated by employers, state workers and literacy providers.

These individual stakeholders forged effective teams with the help of the CSPA Academy process.

THE PROCESS: THE CSPA STATE POLICY ACADEMY

The CSPA State Policy Academy offers a process to help governors develop and implement policy to address pressing issues which cross agency and public/private sector boundaries. The results-oriented Academy provides an opportunity for state leaders to:

- Define a particular issue or problem as it relates to their state;

- Develop a unique approach to the problem;
- Fashion policy options for their governor's consideration;
- Produce a two-year action plan which can be effectively implemented.

Ten states were competitively selected to participate in CSPA's State Policy Academy for Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity. Their governors appointed state teams of five to ten key decision makers influencing policy in literacy, education, employment and training, and human services. Several teams included representation from both the public and private sectors. These teams met twice with national experts selected by CSPA for their knowledge of the issue and practical experience in policy, program development, finance, and accountability. During May 1987, Academy state teams conducted an environmental scan; defined the problem unique to their state; and devised policy goals, policy objectives, and tentative strategies. In December 1987, Academy teams developed action plans to implement their policies and strategies. Between the two meetings state teams worked on their own to further develop their policy and strategies and to build support for implementation. CSPA provided in-state technical assistance when requested by arranging visits by Academy faculty, CSPA staff, or other state team members.

Nine state teams completed the process with well-developed policies, plans for implementation, improved policy development and political communication skills, and team commitment to achieve results. One state chose not to continue in the Academy process after Academy I.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Florida, Idaho, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia participated in the CSPA State Policy Academy on Enhancing Literacy for Jobs Productivity.

Four states were able to design comprehensive, integrated approaches to the problem. Three states created special interagency projects or programs. Two states strengthened their interagency understanding of the problem and laid the groundwork for change.

Comprehensive, Integrated Approaches

The **Florida** Adult Literacy Plan ties literacy enhancement to the state policy goals of dependency reduction and economic development. Jointly signed by the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, and the Departments of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Labor, and Corrections, the Plan sets clear policy objectives for the enhancement of adult literacy for jobs and productivity and mandates the statewide development of local, interagency literacy plans. The local plans must demonstrate collaboration between Local Education Agencies (Leas), the JTPA, and social services systems at the local level and address the needs of priority, target groups such as welfare recipients and incarcerated adults. The plans must also include an accountability component to track the employment and related outcomes of literacy services.

The **Massachusetts** Workforce Literacy Plan presents workforce literacy as a state economic development problem, targets the populations most seriously affected, and proposes solutions, including an ambitious increase in state funding. The plan received broad support from the Secretaries of Economic Affairs and Labor, the Commissioner of Education, the Chancellor of

Higher Education, the Massachusetts Coalition of Adult Literacy (MCAL), and the AFL-CIO. The Massachusetts team spearheaded the interagency coordination called for in the Plan to develop: a uniform, statewide data collection process; a coordinated R.F.P. process for literacy providers; uniform standards for program effectiveness and client outcomes; and comprehensive, interagency, regional planning for literacy services.

Michigan's workforce literacy plan, *Countdown 2000,* developed and refined throughout the Academy project, recommends the statewide adoption of a new "workforce literacy" definition to drive all adult training and education programs and proposes sweeping changes in the state's training and employment system. These changes are supported by the development of the Michigan Opportunity Card and the Michigan Human Investment Fund. Envisioned as a driving force to integrate existing programs, weed out ineffective programs, and coordinate the development of future programs, the Michigan Opportunity Card provides access to job training and educational services for all Michigan adults. The Michigan Human Investment Fund is a joint venture between the private sector and the state departments and agencies that are involved in adult training and educational programs. The members of the Fund form a board of directors to oversee and coordinate management of the entire human investment system.

The **Virginia** team developed a comprehensive and detailed literacy policy calling for a dramatic increase in literacy funding and targeting of services to priority populations. The plan created a public (State Adult Literacy Committee) and private (Virginia Literacy Foundation) structure for the development of literacy programs and funding. It established detailed mechanisms for coordinating this structure and ensuring future accountability of the literacy system. Implementation plans called for interagency, public/private regional literacy committees; the targeting of literacy funding to specific priority groups; and an extensive public awareness and marketing campaign.

The state appropriated $4.25 million from the general fund for the enhancement of literacy services for the 1988-1990 biennium, in contrast to the previous biennial appropriation of $40,000. By December, 1988, the Virginia Literacy Foundation achieved its goal of $3 million, providing support to volunteer literacy programs around the state.

Interagency Strategies and Targeted Programs

The **Missouri** team developed a two-pronged literacy policy with prevention and remediation policy objectives establishing LIFT – Missouri, a literacy foundation funded by the private sector, model programs in workplace literacy, dropout prevention, and programs for welfare recipients. State agencies prepared a plan for more effective use of all resources currently available for literacy and basic skills training. The Academy team staffed the Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy, whose recommendations incorporated much of the team's plan.

The **North Carolina** Report of the Governor's Commission on Literacy recommended the creation of a North Carolina Advisory Council on Literacy and a North Carolina Literacy Trust Fund to encourage private financial contributions to the literacy effort and to provide additional resources to support both public and private literacy efforts. An Office of Literacy in the Department of Administration was created to provide staff support to the Advisory Council and the Fund. State literacy efforts targeted the needs of welfare recipients, high school dropouts, dislocated workers, the working poor, the unemployed, parents of at-risk youth, and workers with limited literacy skills who are employed by small businesses. Policy goals focused on enhancing workplace literacy, fostering cooperation and coordination among state agencies and the private sector, increasing

program effectiveness and accountability, and facilitating programs in which parents and children can jointly enhance their literacy skills.

The **Tennessee** action plan called for increasing state funding for literacy by 400%. While the Tennessee team did not win its full funding request from the legislature, programs increased. County-based literacy services were expanded to statewide coverage, a significant achievement. Workplace literacy programs were begun in 25 major businesses. Literacy programs were established in inner-city public housing projects.

"The Sequoia Award," was created to honor communities making significant literacy progress. Public awareness has grown. New alliances have been forged. The literacy effort now has a business support group comprised of 207 major businesses including Bell, Levi-Strauss, and GTE.

Interagency Groundwork For Change

The **Idaho** team developed a practical, modest plan. Emphasis was placed on increasing public awareness of the literacy problem; gaining top-level attention within state government; enhancing workforce literacy; and increasing interagency and public/private collaboration. The team moved the literacy initiative into the policy mainstream by firmly connecting it to the Governor's Workforce 2000 Task Force. The Workforce Literacy subcommittee of the Task Force accepted the Academy Team's recommendations for improved referral of the unemployed to literacy programs by the Department of Employment, and the development of pilot workplace literacy programs.

Utah ACCESS, the Academy Team's plan, set policy direction and established a Governor's Task Force with three subcommittees to set literacy policy for regular education programs, special target populations, and the workplace. The No Read-No Graduate Committee Report presents 16 recommendations designed to strengthen reading programs at the local district level. Proposed welfare-to-work legislation, similar to California's GAIN program, couples continued receipt of welfare benefits with literacy education, job training and job placement. The Utah Adult Education Plan targets adults with limited English language skills, adults from urban areas with high rates of unemployment, adults from rural areas, and immigrant and institutionalized adults.

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

The experiences of the nine states involved in the CSPA State Policy Academy for Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity generated lessons which can help other states in making progress in this policy area. They are summarized below.

Lesson one: A cross-cutting policy team of top level decision makers is critical to success. All major stakeholders must be represented, even if they are seen by some as barriers to progress. Teams with strong leadership from the Governor's Office were best able to implement the most comprehensive policies. The states with private sector involvement also produced strong policies and effective implementation. Teams need a good balance between politically knowledgeable and operationally knowledgeable members.

Lesson two: State teams performing thorough environmental scans had a clearer understanding of the problem and more cohesive teams. The process establishes openness

and trust. Differences surface early before opinions become solidified. Prejudices can be discarded.

Lesson three: A well-analyzed and documented problem is worth the effort. States with weak problem diagnosis had difficulties maintaining momentum throughout the Academy process and in implementation.

Lesson four: Teams that developed measurable, outcome-oriented policy objectives were more successful over time in implementing their policy than teams that did not. If a strategy or program is defeated in the political process, without policy objectives team members are back at square one. Policy objectives guide implementation beyond short-term gains. They institutionalize success.

Lesson five: Teams that developed alternative strategies were more successful in policy implementation than those that did not. Designing a policy with only one strategy leaves the entire initiative vulnerable to attack and defeat if the strategy goes down in political flames or doesn't produce results as expected.

Lesson six: State teams which sought critical review from outsiders (faculty and peers), tested their own assumptions, and estimated future impacts produced more effective policies.

Lesson seven: A fully-developed action plan with several strategies, many operational objectives, and commitment of major stakeholders leads to effective implementation of a comprehensive, integrated initiative. Teams with less comprehensive plans exhibited one or more of these team characteristics: lack of team leadership; imbalance in team membership between politically and technically knowledgeable members; team unwillingness to work on detail; inability to listen to different perspectives.

Lesson eight: Effective action is possible even with an incomplete action plan. State actions fell into three broad categories: comprehensive, integrated approaches; special interagency projects or programs; and stronger interagency groundwork for change. While not all states produced major systems change, all achieved program innovation. Every team applied new thinking, planning and collaboration to enhancing literacy for jobs and productivity.

Chapter 1: Introduction

THE STAKES

> In previous centuries, the wealth of nations was thought to consist of gold in the national treasury and jewels in the emperor's crown. In more recent years, wealth has often been equated with factories, mines and production machinery within a nation's borders.
>
> As the miraculous rebirth of Europe and Japan after World War II has proven, however, the foundation of national wealth is really people – the human capital represented by their knowledge, skills, organizations, and motivations.[1]
>
> William B. Johnston
> *Workforce 2000*

This report of the Council of State Policy and Planning Agencies (CSPA) State Policy Academy on Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity describes how nine states invested in human potential. The literacy initiatives of these states show how the Governor's Office, the Job Training Partnership system, and the education system can work together to improve the employability of the state's workforce.

The U.S. Department of Labor funded the CSPA Academy, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education, because Department leaders understood the stakes to be nothing less than continued economic prosperity for the nation and its workers.

Extensive research, documented in *Workforce 2000*, supports the Department's point of view. The nation's economic resurgence depends on whether the United States can:

- Stimulate world growth;
- Improve productivity in service industries;
- Improve the dynamism of an aging workforce;
- Reconcile the needs of women, work and families;
- Integrate Blacks and Hispanics fully into the workforce; and
- Improve workers' education and skills.[2]

This is no easy task. The mismatch between workers' skills and jobs is ever more pronounced. A gap is emerging between the relatively low education and skills of workers entering the labor force, many of whom are disadvantaged, and the advancing skill requirements of the new economy.

Consider these facts:

- The population and the workforce will grow more slowly than at any time since the 1930s. The labor force, which exploded by 2.9 percent per year in the 1970s, will be expanding by only 1 percent annually in the 1990s.
- The average age of the population and the workforce will rise, and the pool of young workers entering the labor market will shrink. The average age of the workforce will climb from 36 today to 39 by the year 2000. The number of young workers age 16-24 will drop by almost 2 million, or 8 percent.

- Almost two-thirds of the new entrants into the workforce between now and the year 2000 will be women, many of whom have had their education or work experience interrupted by childbirth/child rearing.

- Minorities will be a larger share of new entrants into the labor force. Between now and the year 2000, non-whites will account for 29 percent of the new entrants into the workforce.

- Immigrants will represent the largest share of the increase in the population and the workforce since the first World War. Approximately 600,000 legal and illegal immigrants are projected to enter the United States annually throughout the balance of the century. Two-thirds of these immigrants of working age are likely to join the labor force.[3]

While the labor force is shrinking and growing older, and its composition changing, the shape of the U.S. economy is also changing. U.S. growth and world growth are becoming more tightly linked. American workers must perform their jobs in an international marketplace. U.S. manufacturing employment is declining while services are growing. The shift to a service economy brings major changes for American workers including changes in work location, work hours, the structure of work, use of technology, and responsiveness to customers. These changes demand new skills and competencies from workers. Finally, the nation must substantially increase its productivity if the U.S. economy is to grow at its historic average rate of 3 percent per year.[4]

After reviewing the facts, the trends, the resulting challenges, and the resources available at the federal and state levels, officials at the Department of Labor, along with other policy makers, concluded that enhancing the literacy of working age adults is essential if the nation is to successfully meet the economic challenges it faces.

THE CONTEXT: THE JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT (JTPA)

The Job Training Partnership Act (PL 97-300 as amended by 99-570) provides a context for connecting literacy to employment. Passed in 1982, the law was designed to strengthen the ties between training and employment, particularly permanent employment in the private sector. The new system was founded on five principles:

- The outcome of training and job services delivery (employment) is as important as the process of service delivery;

- Service delivery focusing on training and related services rather than income maintenance or wage subsidy will lead to better long-term results for clients;

- Substantive private sector involvement in the planning and oversight of the program is critical to success;

- Decentralized program management, with more responsibility and discretion given to states and local government, will produce better results; and

- Increased accountability at the state and local levels through application of quantified standards of performance ensures a better long-term return on public investment.

By creating a structure of local Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) governed by Private Industry Councils (PICs) in which employers predominated, the law ensured that training would reflect the needs of local employers. But the law also ensured that the Governor and his or her executive department directors could guide statewide policy of the JTPA system through the State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC). An extensive accountability system based on a series of performance standards adjusted for local circumstances encouraged SDAs to focus on outcomes. Through their activities on the PICs, local employers began to realize that publicly funded training

could be tailored to meet their needs. Even the basic skills of those long unemployed could be improved to a level which would enable them to compete with workers already on the payroll.

The early years of JTPA implementation laid the foundation for 1) private/public partnership in the design of training programs; 2) the recruitment into those programs of dependent or hard-to-reach populations; 3) public and private sector awareness that the factor of low basic skills was a significant barrier to successful employment for many individuals; and 4) results-oriented, publicly funded education and training services leading directly to employment outcomes.

Within the last four years SDAs around the country have demonstrated success in connecting unemployed and disadvantaged individuals with permanent, private sector employment through basic skills training as well as traditional job training.

Programs have:

- Funded literacy/remedial programs for both in-school and out-of-school youth and adults within the requirements of federal law using Title IIA, Training Services for the Disadvantaged; Title IIB, Summer Youth and Employment and Training; and Title III, Employment and Training Assistance for Dislocated Workers;
- Created innovative and comprehensive approaches to successfully train and place long-term welfare recipients using 6 percent incentive grants under Title IIA;
- Worked collaboratively with other agencies, particularly Adult Basic Education (ABE) and vocational education programs, to improve basic skills curriculum and job training programs using the 8 percent education coordination and grant set-asides of Title IIA.

Through its basic design, JTPA creates a context for connecting literacy training to jobs and productivity. It offers motive, means, and method – a fertile ground for local experimentation. The Department of Labor sought a process to involve stakeholders at the state level in broadening and expanding this local experimentation.

THE STAKEHOLDERS

Investing in adult literacy to strengthen the nation's or a state's economy requires a different way of thinking. Literacy is not just the ability to read and write. Nor is it merely a process of self-development. To be literate, individuals must have a range of specific skills that relate to specific employment environments. Effective literacy programs require a strong partnership in the state government between traditional literacy providers, the education system, and the state's employment and training system, specifically, the Job Training Partnership (JTPA) system. To promote systemic change all stakeholders need to be allies.

Key stakeholders include the governor's office, the education system as well as literacy providers, the JTPA employment and training system, and the business community. These potential partners, represented on state teams, arrived at the first Academy meeting with separate and pressing concerns.

Policymakers from governors' offices faced the staggering costs of dependency on state-funded programs; high unemployment or, conversely, a labor shortage; stagnant economies; or loss of business due to the pressures of foreign competition. Was enhancing adult literacy an effective strategy for solving these problems? How could the departments of education, human services, and employment be cajoled into working together? How should the private sector be involved? What was the appropriate relationship of state government with local, private sector programs?

Directors of state adult education programs confronted under-funded programs and teachers; services meeting only a fraction of the population in need; outmoded curricula; and non-existent training for teachers and volunteers. Their programs were critical for many adults, yet they could not readily communicate their successful results to other stakeholders. Would partnership with the governor's office and with the JTPA system really solve these problems? Would it worsen the competition for already scarce resources? How could state ABE programs relate to private, voluntary literacy programs? Should scarce ABE resources be shared with these programs?

JTPA directors had difficulty recruiting and retaining high school dropouts into literacy programs. When recruited, those below a seventh grade reading level required costly support services which negatively affected their JTPA performance standards. Would a literacy partnership improve this situation? Despite successful collaboration of JTPA with education in some areas of the country, many JTPA administrators wondered what literacy training had to do with job training anyway? Wasn't that education's job?

Employers were becoming increasingly concerned about the skills of their workforce, both at the entry and advanced levels. Many adults did not possess the reading, computation, or reasoning skills needed to get and keep a job or make a transition to a new job when the old one became obsolete. Education was government's job, but training was frequently an employer's expense. Was there enough common interest for collaboration? Could politicians move beyond rhetoric? Could government-funded programs be made more cost effective?

State leaders at Academy I were seeking practical solutions to these problems. Each potential partner had reasons for working together to enhance workforce literacy. Yet each feared they would lose something. The task was complicated by a lack of a common definition of literacy, and by the fact that the issue cuts across state agency and state/local government boundaries. Concrete information on the problem is difficult to find and there is no one certain solution. This is exactly the type of major policy problem that the CSPA Academy process is designed to address.

THE PROCESS: THE CSPA STATE POLICY ACADEMY

The CSPA State Policy Academy offers a process to help governors develop and implement policy that addresses pressing issues which cross agency and public/private sector boundaries.

The results-oriented process provides an opportunity for state leaders to:

- Clearly define a particular issue or problem as it relates to their state;
- Develop, with help from hand-picked experts, a unique approach to the problem;
- Fashion policy options for their governor's consideration; and
- Produce a two-year action plan which can be effectively implemented.

Ten states were competitively selected to participate in CSPA's State Policy Academy for Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity. Ten governors created state teams of five to ten key decision makers influencing policy in literacy, education, employment, and training and human services. Several teams included representation from both the public and private sectors. These teams met together with experts carefully selected by CSPA for their knowledge of the issue and practical experience in policy, program development, finance, and accountability.

State teams and Academy faculty met twice during the project. Each Academy meeting, lasting four days, was an intensive policy building session involving state team, peer group, and faculty interaction. Teams prepared extensive-

ly for these meetings – gathering information, holding meetings with advisory groups and other stakeholders, and drafting and redrafting documents for presentation.

During the May 1987 Academy, state teams conducted an environmental scan; defined the problem unique to their states; and devised policy goals, policy objectives, and tentative strategies. At the December 1987 Academy, teams developed action plans to implement their policies and strategies. Between the two meetings, state teams worked on their own to further develop policy and strategies and to build support for implementation. CSPA provided in-state technical assistance when requested. To meet state needs, CSPA arranged visits by Academy faculty, CSPA staff, or other state team members.

Nine state teams completed the process with well-developed policies, plans for implementation, improved policy development, political communication skills, and team commitment to achieve results. One state chose not to continue in the Academy process after Academy I.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The purpose of the CSPA State Policy Academy on Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity was to help states develop a response to their workforce literacy problem through the coordination of state and local, public and private efforts and resources. The U.S. Departments of Labor and Education wished, in particular, to promote improved coordination of state departments of education and the state and local JTPA system.

Florida, Idaho, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia participated in the CSPA State Policy Academy on Enhancing Literacy for Jobs Productivity. They gathered at two Academy meetings and worked in their own states for a period of 18 months. Four states were able to design comprehensive, integrated approaches to the problem. Three states created special interagency projects or programs. Two states strengthened interagency understanding of the problem and laid the groundwork for change.

Comprehensive, Integrated Approaches

The State of Florida

The Florida Adult Literacy Plan was the final product of the state's participation in the Academy project. Jointly signed by the Governor; the Commissioner of Education and the Departments of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Labor, and Corrections; it sets clear policy objectives for the enhancement of adult literacy for jobs and productivity:

> By 1995, Florida will reduce the percent of the adult population lacking basic literacy skills, defined as below 4th grade level, from the current level of 3.5 percent to 2 percent.
>
> By 1995, Florida will reduce the percent of the adult population lacking functional literacy skills, defined as below 9th grade level, from the current level of 18 percent to 10 percent.

The Florida Plan, designed in part to support recently passed welfare reform measures, mandates the statewide development of local, interagency literacy plans. These plans must demonstrate collaboration between Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and the JTPA and social services systems at the local level. The state urged local leaders to address the needs of welfare recipients, incarcerated adults and other priority groups. The plans must also include an accountability component to track the outcomes of literacy services.

The Florida Plan moved literacy as a policy issue beyond the strict purview of the Department of Education. For the first time, literacy enhancement was tied to the state policy goals of dependency reduction and economic development. Local school districts, the recipients of federal and state literacy funds,

must now target literacy services to populations prioritized through state, interagency policy development. For continued receipt of funds, districts must work collaboratively with local JTPA agencies and others. Providers will be held accountable for results. These important features of the Florida State Plan were a direct result of team participation in Academy meetings.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Academy team produced the Massachusetts Workforce Literacy Plan and implementation strategies. The Massachusetts Plan, greatly influenced by the information presented at Academy I, presented literacy as an economic development problem in the state. It targeted the populations most seriously affected and proposed solutions that included an ambitious increase in state funding. Implementation strategies encompassed raising awareness, promoting interagency collaboration, and increasing accountability for results within the literacy system.

The challenge for the Massachusetts team and the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign (CLC), whose executive and deputy directors headed the Academy team, was to build support for this workforce literacy expansion plan. This necessitated involvement of a number of constituency groups and agencies. Academy faculty worked with the Massachusetts team to develop a comprehensive stakeholder involvement strategy.

Through Campaign efforts, the Secretaries of Economic Affairs and Labor, the Commissioners of Education, the Chancellor of Higher Education, the Massachusetts Coalition of Adult Literacy (MCAL), and the AFL-CIO all publicly supported the Workforce Literacy Plan.

The Massachusetts Plan was featured in many news articles in the state's major newspapers and in many local papers. At the Democratic State Convention, the CLC organized and staffed a Literacy Breakfast and Awareness Day. Key legislators (10 of 40 Senators and 55 of 160 Representatives) sponsored a Legislative Briefing on Adult Literacy addressed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader.

The Campaign spearheaded the interagency coordination called for in the Plan. By December 1988, the Campaign, working with interagency task forces, had developed a uniform data collection process; a coordinated R.F.P. process for literacy providers; uniform standards for program effectiveness and client outcomes; and comprehensive, interagency, regional planning for literacy services. The CLC and Commonwealth Futures (a policy group working on youth employment issues) planned a joint initiative on urban males, ages 16-24.

As of July 1988, the Campaign had not received its requested appropriation. The Campaign's legislation (requesting a budget of $8 million) had received a favorable report from the Joint Education Committee and from the Ways and Means Committee, but no appropriations were attached. Due to unexpected revenue shortfalls and a possible budget deficit, all expansion requests, including the $1 million set-aside for literacy in the Governor's budget, were put on hold.

In spite of this difficulty, the Massachusetts Plan has remained the Campaign's guidance system. Elements of the plan which do not require major new appropriations are being implemented. In six or seven months, when the budget and the political environment change, the Campaign will try again, with a proven track record and subsequent increased support.

The State of Michigan

Michigan's workforce literacy plan, *Countdown 2000*, developed and refined throughout the Academy project, is being fully implemented.

The *Countdown 2000* report was unveiled by the Governor in his January 20, 1988, State of the State address. It contained eight major recommendations:

1. Statewide adoption of a new "workforce literacy" definition to drive all adult training and education programs;
2. Establishment of a public/private policy board to oversee the design and implementation of an integrated, outcome-oriented system;
3. Simplified access to the education and training system through "service accounts," which individuals can draw upon for training and education;
4. Development of a standard assessment, using the new definition, for each participant in training and education programs;
5. Joint investment of the public and private sector in the system through encouragement of unlimited partnerships and the creation of a wide array of incentives for such partnerships;
6. Creation of a Human Resources Research and Development Institute, a public/private joint venture which would perform research, evaluate programs, and develop curricula and materials;
7. Training and technical assistance for adult training and educational providers with emphasis on designing and delivering programs that meet the new workforce literacy definition;
8. A public information/marketing campaign from the highest level of government promoting a new workforce training and education system based on individual choice, lifelong learning, and accountability.

Implementation of these eight recommendations involved two key components: the Michigan Opportunity Card and the Michigan Human Investment Fund.

A wallet-sized, plastic credit card, the Michigan Opportunity Card will be available to all adults. The card will provide access to job training and educational services. The team envisioned the Michigan Opportunity Card as a driving force for integrating existing programs, weeding out ineffective programs, and coordinating the development of future programs. The card also signals a fundamental shift in public attitude by recognizing an individual's rights and responsibilities in pursuing lifelong education and training consistent with the realities of the modern economy.

The Michigan Human Investment Fund is a joint venture between the private sector and the state departments and agencies that are involved in adult training and educational programs. The members of the Fund form a board of directors to oversee and coordinate management of the entire human investment system.

The Academy project encouraged the Michigan team to set ambitious goals – not only to move literacy into the policy mainstream, but also to set a course of systemic change through increased accountability. The Academy's emphasis on private sector involvement set the stage for a major corporate partnership.

Michigan's course inevitably challenged traditional methods of connecting individuals with literacy training. It also required the establishment and testing of new data systems to measure individual and provider performance and monitor policy results.

Workforce literacy has become the major economic development issue in Michigan. The Academy process helped the Michigan team create *Countdown 2000* by providing critical information at the right time, and by offering a process which ensured coordination and continuity of effort by all stakeholders.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

The Virginia team developed a comprehensive and detailed literacy policy calling for a dramatic increase in literacy funding and targeting of services to priority populations. The plan created a public and private structure for the development of literacy programs and funding. It established detailed mechanisms for coor-

dinating this structure and ensuring future accountability of the literacy system. Implementation plans called for interagency, public/private regional literacy committees, the targeting of literacy funding to specific priority groups, and an extensive public awareness and marketing campaign.

By July 1988, all twelve of the regional literacy coordinating committees were established and had met at least once. The coordinating committees serve as the local focal points for all literacy activities. Their first task will be the implementation of regional/local literacy information and referral systems. As a priority, the systems will target ADC (welfare) recipients and teen mothers. Within six to nine months the regional committees will begin to develop regional literacy plans.

The State Office of Adult Literacy has met with all relevant state agencies regarding the development of a coordinated literacy information and referral system which targets priority populations such as ADC recipients, teen mothers, and unemployed youth. The system will also include information and referral on necessary support services such as child care and transportation.

As of September 1, 1988, the Virginia literacy marketing campaign "hit the streets." Public service announcements (PSAs) were targeted both to regions and particular client populations.

Several literacy programs have been piloted which target special populations. One hundred thousand dollars of JTPA funds are supporting three programs which serve ADC recipients and unemployed youth, ages 17-24. Upon successful completion, these projects will be replicated.

Most notably, for the 1988-1990 biennium, the state appropriated $4.25 million dollars for the enhancement of literacy services. This contrasts with a state general fund appropriation for the previous biennium of $40,000. As a result of the 1988-1990 state budget, the relationship of state to federal funds for local providers has changed dramatically – from almost 0 percent state/ 100 percent federal to 51 percent state/ 49 percent federal. This shift ensures that state literacy policy will become the driving force in the implementation of local literacy programs.

The formula allocation of state funds to local ABE providers was adjusted to reflect the numbers of ADC recipients and unemployed youth, ages 16-24, in the provider service area. This sharply increased the amount of literacy funding that went to urban areas with large low-income populations. In addition, the state has now required local providers to identify and report on target groups served and outcomes achieved.

By December 1988, the Virginia Literacy Foundation achieved its goal of $3 million. These funds will provide support to volunteer literacy programs around the state.

Federal adult education funds will be used to provide technical assistance to local literacy providers in eight, primarily rural regions where there is need. Technical assistance will stress improved management, curriculum design, and instruction.

In addition, VLFB and state funds will jointly fund a training coordinator at the state's ABE Resource Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, who will provide training and technical assistance to private, volunteer literacy groups.

Special Interagency Projects or Programs

The State of Missouri

The Missouri team developed a two-pronged literacy policy with prevention and remediation policy objectives and a well-defined, two-year action plan. The action plan included:

- Staffing the Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy, which included multi-agency

public and private membership. It was expected that the policy goals and objectives outlined by the Academy team would be incorporated into the work of the Advisory Council:

- Establishing a literacy foundation funded by the private sector;
- Establishing model literacy programs in workplace literacy, dropout prevention, and for welfare recipients;
- Preparing a plan for more effective use of all resources currently available for literacy and basic skills training, including JTPA, Adult Basic Education, Wagner-Peyser, Carl Perkins, Vocational-Education, and Library Services and Construction Act funds.

As of December 1988, 14 of the approximately 20 action steps outlined by the team at Academy II were completed or underway.

Recommendations from the Governor's Advisory Council were released in fall 1988. Literacy Investment for Tomorrow (LIFT) began funding innovative, literacy projects in early winter of 1988. The plan for more effective use of existing resources has been completed, and agencies have begun model projects.

The State of North Carolina

The North Carolina team participated only in Academy I, yet the work begun there helped to produce a final product, the Report of the Governor's Commission on Literacy. The draft recommendations echo many themes sounded at the first Academy: tie literacy to jobs and productivity; promote public/private and interagency collaboration; and target resources to priority populations.

The Report's recommendations included:

- Creation of a North Carolina Advisory Council on Literacy. The Council should have 22 members appointed by the Governor representing the Department of Community Colleges, the North Carolina Literacy Association, business and industry, and citizens at large, as well as the president of the Community College system, the director of the North Carolina Literacy Association, the State Superintendent of Education, a state senator, and a state representative.
- Creation of a North Carolina Literacy Trust Fund to encourage private financial contributions to the literacy effort and to provide additional resources to support both public and private literacy efforts.
- Creation of an Office of Literacy in the Department of Administration to provide staff support to the Advisory Council and the Literacy Trust Fund.

The Commission suggested six policy goals for the work of the Council and the Trust Fund:

1. Focus on the need of adult learners with specific attention to the needs of welfare recipients, high school dropouts, dislocated workers, the working poor, the unemployed, parents of at-risk youth, and workers with limited literacy skills who are employed by small businesses;
2. Enhance literacy education in the workplace;
3. Foster cooperation and coordination among state agencies and the private sector in order to get maximum impact from existing programs;
4. Increase program effectiveness and accountability;
5. Support public education reform to prevent future adult illiteracy;
6. Facilitate programs in which parents and children can jointly enhance their literacy skills.

Based on the work of the Commission, several literacy related budget items, totaling approximately $5 million and including a new Of-

fice of Literacy, were added to the Governor's proposed budget. The Office of Literacy in the Governor's Office was established in June 1988.

Funding has been found for 1) a dropout prevention program for at-risk youth; 2) eight preschool programs to pilot an intergenerational literacy program; 3) customized literacy programs provided by community colleges for small business; 4) a "Boston Compact" type program for youth ages 16-24; 5) a basic skills enhancement program for employees of state agencies; and 6) a public/private, university-based, technical assistance network and resource bank for literacy professionals, volunteers, and industry needing customized literacy programs.

The State of Tennessee

The Tennessee team produced an action plan with thirteen operational objectives. They included increasing the high school retention rate; creating workforce literacy programs; forming a Literacy Volunteer Corps; creating workforce literacy subcommittees in each Private Industry Council; establishing rural literacy pilot projects; targeting public housing residents for literacy training; strengthening the continuum of literacy services; and increasing state funding for literacy by 400 percent.

In Tennessee, the Academy project strengthened the connection between literacy and jobs and productivity. Faculty and state participants stressed that this connection would support the team's request to the Legislature and build alliances with the business community and other state agencies. The process also helped the team to identify creative opportunities for interagency collaboration. For example, the Academy I draft plan called for the creation of Adult Education and Training Councils within each DOE district. The Academy II plan recommended, instead, the creation of literacy subcommittees within each existing Private Industry Council, which already functioned as a forum for education/business collaboration.

While the Tennessee team did not win its full funding request from the legislature, programs have increased. County-based literacy services were expanded to statewide coverage, a significant achievement. Workplace literacy programs were begun in 25 major businesses. Literacy programs were established in inner-city public housing projects. "The Sequoia Award" was created to honor communities making significant literacy progress. Public awareness has grown.

Partly because of Academy emphasis on public/private partnerships, new alliances have been forged. The literacy effort now has a business support group composed of 207 major businesses including Bell, Levi-Strauss, and GTE. GTE is sponsoring a matching program: for every 150 hours of employee time as a literacy volunteer, the company donates one thousand dollars to a literacy provider. The team hopes that these new allies will support passage of next year's funding request.

Interagency Groundwork for Change

The State of Idaho

The Idaho team developed a practical, modest plan. Emphasis was placed on increasing public awareness of the literacy problem; gaining top-level attention within state government; enhancing workforce literacy; and increasing interagency and public/private collaboration.

Due to the urging of faculty and peers at Academy meetings, the team moved the literacy initiative into the policy mainstream by firmly connecting it to the Governor's Workforce 2000 Task Force. A member of the Task Force was appointed to the Academy team and named chairman of the Task Force's Committee on workforce literacy. The Committee met monthly and travelled throughout the state meeting with employers, educators, and community leaders on the subject of workforce literacy. Their activity constituted a public relations/awareness campaign across the state.

The Workforce Literacy Committee's final report, published in November 1988, accepted several of the Academy team's recommendations for action.

As a part of the Academy effort, the Department of Employment is identifying practical ways in which employment office line staff who deal with the public can identify persons who need basic skills training and encourage them to seek assistance. Identified methods will be used statewide.

An interagency group, representing vocational education, general education, employment, and the Idaho Private Industry Council Association met with the Academy team to develop pilot workplace literacy programs.

The State of Utah

The Academy team produced a blueprint for action, Utah ACCESS, which set policy direction and established a Governor's Task Force with three subcommittees. The subcommittees were to set literacy policy for regular education programs, special target populations, and the workplace. The work of these subcommittees influenced the development of three products:

- The No Read-No Graduate Committee Report presents 16 recommendations designed to strengthen reading programs at the local district level.
- Proposed welfare-to-work legislation similar to California's GAIN program couples continued receipt of welfare benefits with literacy education, job training, and job placement.
- As a high priority, the Utah Adult Education Plan targets adults with limited English language skills; adults from urban areas with high rates of unemployment; adults from rural areas; and immigrant and institutionalized adults.

Sometimes well-founded initiatives are overtaken by events.

This proved to be the case in Utah. A change in personnel in the Governor's Office and the shift in leadership from the Department of Community and Economic Development to the Department of Education complicated implementation of Utah ACCESS. In winter-spring 1988, a rising tax-payers revolt became a major concern of both the legislature and the Governor and sounded the death knell of a major literacy initiative. As a result of the Academy, however, the team laid interagency groundwork for change. Utah ACCESS remains a good plan with promising components, waiting for a more favorable political climate.

THE REPORT

This report documents the experiences and results of these nine states. It describes how the process was used to develop state-specific workforce literacy policies and action plans. Their experiences illustrate how such policies and plans can be part of an effective strategy for long-term economic development.

Chapter Two frames the issue and presents the partnerships needed.

Chapter Three discusses the major steps in the policy development cycle and illustrates, with specific examples, how the states constructed their literacy policies and action plans. The examples emphasize each state's unique response to the challenges of enhancing workforce literacy.

Chapter Four presents an overall assessment of the Academy results – state accomplishments and literacy partnerships.

Chapter Five presents in detail each state's experience, process, and products as it moved through the Academy.

Chapter 2: Adult Literacy: A New Way of Thinking - a New Partnership

DEFINING LITERACY FOR THE WORKPLACE

Until recently a person was presumed literate if he or she could read and write at a specified grade level. While the designated grade level has changed during the last fifty years from fourth grade to eighth grade, the basic presumption of literacy at any grade level is being challenged. First, there are no guarantees that a person stamped "grade 8" will have the skills needed to function on the job and at home. Second, the skills needed for employment are changing rapidly and growing ever more complex.

Literacy means something more than decoding words. It means interpreting schedules – a bus schedule or a sophisticated computerized manufacturing schedule. It is following directions for using complex tools in the factory or in the kitchen. More than understanding or interpreting, literacy is also communicating, orally or in writing. It is giving directions clearly and succinctly so others can easily follow; it is explaining a complex operation so that participants in the procedure understand how their part contributes to the whole. Literacy is computing. Literacy is taking ideas apart and putting them together.

As the state teams began their deliberations at Academy I, they were confronted with the need to define literacy in a concrete and realistic way. In order to learn about the problem – its magnitude and severity – they needed to know how to identify it.

What were they planning to invest in? The CSPA Academy Faculty presented the literacy continuum for consideration.

The Literacy Continuum

> How many citizens in my state are illiterate?
>
> Do we have a problem? Exactly what does it look like?
>
> What is literacy anyway?

These questions plagued the state teams when they arrived at Academy I.

Depending on the definition, estimates of national illiteracy range from as low as .5 percent to as high as 50 percent of adult Americans. Within the state teams as well, the definitional debate raged. On one side of the debate are the "literalists," on the other side the "contextualists."

The "literalists" argue that if one can read and write short, simple statements relating to everyday life, one is literate. The definition of literacy used by the Census Bureau (completion of six or more years of school) supports this point of view. Literacy programs that register student progress in reading levels reinforce this definition of literacy. The JTPA system uses reading levels as eligibility cut-off points. Individuals need at least a ninth grade reading comprehension level to enter more demanding vocational training or education or be placed in some technical jobs. Traditionally, the education system and Adult Basic Education (ABE)

providers have identified reading levels as appropriate outcomes of literacy training – a fourth grade reading level or a graduate equivalency (i.e. twelfth grade reading level), for example.

Most state team members were comfortable with a reading level definition of literacy. Because it appears easily understood by all, it is convenient shorthand. It is tested by paper and pencil tests. Individuals can be grouped, tracked and counted. A reading level definition is compatible with grade level completion data, something which all states had available. However, some team members argued, successfully completing the ninth grade does not guarantee a ninth grade reading level. Employers on teams were quick to support that point. In fact, a ninth grade reading level does not insure the ability to define and solve problems on the job, especially a job with changing requirements. If the desired outcome of literacy training is a job or a better job, a single reading level standard could be misleading.

The "contextualists" argue that individuals are literate only if their reading, writing, computation, reasoning, and communication skills match the requirements of their environments. This contextual definition of literacy – "using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential" – formed the basis of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) study of literacy in America.[5] Literacy programs that measure individual progress in terms of functional competency development support this view of literacy.

The expected outcome of literacy improvement using this definition is not an academic reading level but competency adequate to a particular context – in this case, the workforce. For example, skills in English as a second language enable an immigrant to take public transportation, to apply for and obtain an entry-level job; basic reading, writing, and computation competencies allow an unemployed worker to train for a specific occupation; oral and written communication skills enable a supervisor to direct others in a complex manufacturing operation; an employee with good reasoning skills successfully completes a task without close supervision; a worker leaving an obsolete job transfers what she knows to the new job environment.

Contextual definitions of literacy may be more relevant for employers, some team members argued, but they are not easily communicated to or understood by the public. By definition, they are difficult to standardize. Standardized tests of functional competency, like NAEP, are expensive to develop and use. The context for literacy must be specified each time one uses a functional definition. It would require the development of work-related competency scales, a time-consuming and expensive process. David Harman in his recent book, *Illiteracy: A National Dilemma*, transcends the debate. Harman argues forcibly that literacy is not just the ability to read at a certain level, or a bag of functional "tricks" carried from context to context, but an essential component of a civilized, democratic society.[6]

While not all support such a global definition, most experts in the literacy field agree with Harman that the definition of literacy keeps changing:

> The attempt to define literacy is like a walk to the horizon: as one walks toward it, it continuously recedes. Similarly, as groups of people achieve the skills formerly defined as literacy, altered circumstances often render definitions obsolete. New definitions replace the old ones as new goals are set. People considered literate by a previous yardstick are now regarded as illiterate.[7]

At Academy I, state team members were offered a practical solution to the definition dilemma. In *Enhancing Adult Literacy: A Policy Guide*, developed by Brizius and Foster for the CSPA Academy, literacy and illiteracy are described

not as absolute conditions but as a continuum of skills:

> When state policymakers look at definitions of literacy they should be examining a continuum, of reading, writing, math and communications skills, not trying to determine what the cut-off point for literacy or illiteracy may be...
>
> Recognizing that all individuals or groups of adults fall somewhere on the continuum of literacy, the task of the policymaker is not to define literacy, but to decide where to put resources to help some people move along the literacy continuum and to judge how far it is necessary for people to move so that other goals, such as creating jobs or improving productivity, can be met.[8]

The concept of the literacy continuum made sense to state team members. Team members with different points of view could find common ground. A workplace context for literacy programs was new for some participants. While the idea of a functional definition seemed chaotic and confusing, the continuum created order. There was room on the continuum for non-readers (grades 0-4 functional level), those needing basic skills (grades 5-8 functional level), and those needed upgrading (grades 9 + functional level). Several policy advisors from governors' offices expressed relief. They no longer had to define an "illiterate" population in their state. Instead, they could target groups whose level of literacy they wished to improve.

Literacy Outcomes

However, accepting the literacy continuum created a new difficulty for team members. How would they know when an individual moved from one point to another on the continuum? If reading levels were innappropriate measures for a workplace context, what measures were appropriate? Further, how could they tie a functional literacy level to the achievement of a particular state objective?

There is no firm guidance for policymakers connecting a particular point on the literacy continuum with a particular outcome such as "high-tech" business recruitment, employment, job advancement, or productivity increase. Even if such guidance existed, no universal national or state literacy standard will solve the economic or social challenges listed in *Workforce 2000*. A massive "quick fix" literacy campaign will no more solve a state's economic development problem or reduce the welfare caseload than "smokestack chasing" or "workfare."

David Harman states:

> There simply is no magical point of literacy at which individuals become employable, perform well in their jobs, carry out the responsibilities of citizenship, qualify for citizenship rights, or become good parents.[9]

State team members wondered how to define appropriate outcomes for literacy efforts, how to hold literacy providers accountable. Faculty urged team members to make educated guesses and track results.[10]

Evidence suggests several general guidelines for choosing outcomes of literacy initiatives:

- **Literacy training, particularly coupled with job-specific training, improves job performance and supports job advancement:** Business and industry are clearly convinced that job-related education and training improve employee performance and increase the value of the employee to the employer. Though it may not be called literacy training, such training does involve instruction in reading, writing, calculation and reasoning, often within the specific context of a particular job. Anthony Carnevale has calculated that employers spent about $210 billion in 1985, training employees to do the job right.[11]

- **Individuals with a high school diploma or equivalency have an easier time join-**

ing and staying in the workforce: Such individuals are also less likely to be chronically dependent on state services. A majority of individuals on welfare have less than a high school degree; the vast majority of those incarcerated are high school dropouts. Improved basic skills in reading, math, and communications can help these individuals to find and hold a job even without a high school equivalency. In addition, high school students with solid basic skills are more likely to stay in school and graduate.

- **Basic skills and the ability to apply those skills to new contexts reduces worker dislocation:** Individuals who can apply reading, writing, and reasoning skills to new job contexts adapt more easily to a changing job market. They are more likely to be successful finding new jobs after a plant closing or layoff.

- **Parents who read to their children improve the child's ability to learn how to read.**

For individuals, the outcomes of literacy programs can be as diverse as improved self-esteem, reading to their children, getting around the neighborhood, filling in a job application, getting off welfare, staying in the same job for more than six months, or job advancement.

Outcomes of state initiatives include a more highly trained workforce; increased numbers of individuals moving off welfare to work; reduced recidivism to prison; reduction in the high school dropout rate as well as increased numbers of dropouts with high school equivalency; reduced numbers of dislocated, unemployed workers; and the prevention of illiteracy in young children.

By the end of Academy I, most team members had defined literacy using a workplace context. They confronted the challenges this definition creates for policymakers. Most teams chose outcomes appropriate to their governors' economic development policy objectives. Several teams designed new systems to measure movement along the literacy continuum and to hold literacy providers accountable for results relevant to employment.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL PARTNERS AT THE STATE LEVEL

A literacy program designed to achieve an eighth grade reading level could be developed by the education system in isolation. But will the graduate of that program be able to fill in a variety of job applications, persist in job seeking in the face of rejection, coordinate day care with employment, organize regular transportation to the job? JTPA can train an unemployed worker in job-specific skills. But does that individual read and write well enough to take the training? Two hundred high school dropouts can be trained in basic skills competencies. But can they perform at a level needed on the job?

Academy team members understood that to achieve the work-related outcomes desired by the state, potential workers, employees and employers, new literacy partnerships must be developed.

Governors: The governors participating in the Academy project, deeply committed to building their economies and enhancing human potential, had made the conceptual link between workforce skills and economic productivity:

> Helping people get the skills necessary to find jobs is one of any Governor's most important areas of action. But significant numbers of our people are not able to "get in the game." At a time when the demographics of our nation's workforce are changing...it is vital that all of our potential workers have the tools they need to find jobs.[12]
>
> Governor John Ashcroft

As partners, governors can bring leadership and focus to a problem. They can involve the private

sector and provide the clout and authority necessary to ensure that separate state agencies work together to solve common problems. Governors' backing can help secure funding for needed program expansion.

Yet, properly investing in human potential is a difficult challenge. States face serious budget constraints. Literacy competes with other priorities like education reform, welfare reform, indigent health care, prison overcrowding, hazardous waste. Tough choices have to be made based on limited information – there is no clear answer as to what works to enhance literacy for jobs and productivity. To make a good investment in literacy and maximize return for their citizens, governors must make decisions and target resources in an environment of uncertainty.

Employers: Business and industry are increasingly facing productivity losses due to insufficiently skilled workers. A 1982 survey of basic skills in the workforce reported that among companies participating in the survey:

- Thirty (30) percent reported secretaries having difficulty reading at the level required by the job.
- Fifty (50) percent reported managers and supervisors unable to write paragraphs free of grammatical errors.
- Fifty (50) percent reported skilled and semi-skilled employees, including bookkeepers, unable to use decimals and fractions in math problems.
- Sixty-five (65) percent reported that basic skills deficiencies limit the job advancement of their high school graduate employees.
- Seventy-three (73) percent reported that such deficiencies inhibit the advancement of non-graduates.[13]

James E. Duffy, President of Communications, ABC Broadcast and Network Divisions, summarizes the challenge:

> No issue is as critical to the future of America as illiteracy in the workforce. We simply cannot allow this nation to enter the 21st century without a literate, skilled, and flexible workforce. From individual businesses to entire industries, the effect of a workforce unprepared for an information-based, service-oriented economy will be devastating.[14]

Employer involvement can strengthen the outcome-orientation of a literacy initiative. It ensures a workplace and employment context for public investment in literacy training. Employers are more likely to get the employees they need for the future through their involvement in literacy programs.

To achieve a literate workforce, the business community should do more than raise public awareness; it needs to invest dollars and take action. Neither can employers be satisfied with isolated, business-sponsored literacy training programs. Business and industry should become involved in changing the education system, the employment and training system, and the political system to meet the literacy needs of the workforce.

The Employment and Training System. The underlying principles of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) provide motivation for local service delivery area (SDA) involvement in literacy initiatives. Local SDAs are held accountable for training and placing disadvantaged, unemployed, or dislocated workers in jobs. They are committed to helping the economically disadvantaged become self-sufficient or find and keep jobs. To do so, SDAs must respond to both the employer as consumer and the unemployed individual as consumer.

Over time, SDAs have realized that many individuals eligible for JTPA services who do not read or write or compute at seventh grade level have a difficult time succeeding in job training programs and tend to be chronically unemployed. Local employers serving on SDA Private Industry Councils recognize that job-

specific skills are not as critical to success in entry-level employment as solid basic skills in reading, communicating, computing, and reasoning.

Recent changes in JTPA regulations support the connection between literacy enhancement, job training, and employment. For program year 1988, the Department of Labor has three policy objectives for JTPA: 1) Encourage increased service to individuals at risk of chronic unemployment; 2) foster training investments which lead to long-term employability; and 3) increase basic skills and occupational competency-based training for youth. In support of these objectives, the adult cost per entered employment standard was raised to $4,500 for Programs Years 1988 and 1989 . This standard contrasts with the Program Years 1986 and 1987 standard of $4,374 per placement. The youth cost per positive termination standard continues to be $4,900.

Yet, despite good reasons to become literacy partners, many Private Industry Councils have held back. Some have focused more effort on containing or reducing their short-term cost per participant than on improving their long-term return on investment. Others feel literacy is education's problem, unaware of workplace research that indicates that the kinds of reading, writing, and analytical tasks workers perform routinely are different from those students are taught in school or in general adult literacy programs.[15] Finally, some PICs dislike involvement with the education system for institutional reasons. They see education as a slow bureaucracy, focused on process, not accountable for results and with little incentive to change.

Adult Basic Education and other Literacy Providers. For many years those who dropped out or were pushed out of the K-12 education system have relied upon adult basic education programs for literacy services. In most states these programs operate in conjunction with local education districts or community colleges and are funded through a combination of federal, state, and occasionally local funds. Additional literacy services, especially those for persons with less than fourth grade reading skills, are provided through local, private literacy programs with volunteer teachers. State and local libraries also promote, provide, or coordinate literacy programs.

Literacy programs have been the isolated, underfunded step-children of the education system. Dealing with a different kind of student (a dropout or an adult) and offering a more practical, less academic curriculum, they are neither fish nor fowl. They have not belonged to the education world, the vocational training world, or the employment and training world. Yet program providers have a literacy teaching methodology that can work, an understanding of basic skills curriculum, and working experience with the "student" of literacy services.

Literacy providers have much to gain from a literacy partnership. They have worked long and hard with inadequate resources and with little public attention or appreciation. Using a workplace context enables providers to better communicate their successes to the public. Greater resources and support enable program expansion, reduce waiting lists, improve curriculum and materials, strengthen the effective use of technology, and train professionals and volunteers. Yet, there is a price. Providers need to share control over the direction and design of literacy programs. Programs need to be held increasingly accountable for specific, employment-related outcomes.

Each constituency brings different strengths to the literacy partnership. The governor's office can bring leadership and visibility resulting in greater attention to the problem, improved resources, and a statewide focus. Employers bring a practical context for literacy enhancement. They help the partnership to focus on outcomes rather than on process. They bring additional resources. The JTPA system offers a dual customer base – disadvantaged and unemployed individuals as well as the employers who can hire them – and an emphasis on accountability. The education/literacy system brings extensive knowledge of the individual

consumer of literacy services and experience in the provision of services. Each partner also has something to risk. Working together, however, they can achieve their independent goals and build a workforce literacy system.

Chapter 3: From Ideas to Action

At Academy I, state policymakers were exposed to a new way of thinking about literacy. They were urged to place literacy in a workplace context. They were asked to stop focusing on illiteracy and to concentrate instead on the literacy continuum, with outcomes that fluctuate based on a particular context. They were encouraged to forge new partnerships.

Team members struggled to understand their different perspectives and to connect the literacy continuum to their unique contexts: the state's present and future economy; particular population groups and literacy levels; the current business environment; the education, literacy and JTPA systems; and their governor's policy goals.

State policymakers were also exposed to the CSPA policy development process. This process guided each state team from the development of its problem statement to the implementation of its joint literacy venture. This chapter briefly describes the steps in the CSPA policy development framework and illustrates how the states used the process to translate new thinking into effective policy and action.

STRATEGIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Strategic policy development is a process that enables state government to set direction, to overcome current or anticipated problems in the state and local environment, and to capitalize on opportunities that will bring present or future benefit to the citizens of that state. It is the artful combination of information, vision, analytical reasoning, consensus-building, decision-making, and commitment to achieve a particular result.

Its absence is most noticeable: the negative consequences of "quick-fix" government solutions. When successfully conducted, the process itself is not noticed. This is because policy is not an end in itself, though policymakers often wish that it were. Instead, strategic policymaking leads to actions and intended outcomes. Public attention rests on the results of the process: a revitalized rural economy, a low unemployment rate, a well-trained workforce.

While this process does not guarantee success, it increases the chances of success by setting direction, clarifying intent, and stating parameters and/or rules for implementing that direction or intent. Effective policy includes:

- A clear statement of the problems or opportunities the policy intends to address or correct;
- A broad goal establishing what is to be accomplished;
- A set of outcome-oriented objectives (strategic objectives, not operational objectives), which move towards the accomplishment of that goal; and
- Specific strategies, programs, and actions that will enable the accomplishment of those objectives.

Figure One represents the policy development cycle used during the Academy. The three major phases are: 1) the development of proposals; 2) the enactment of policies and programs; and 3) program implementation. Each of these three phases roughly corresponds to events in a state's planning and

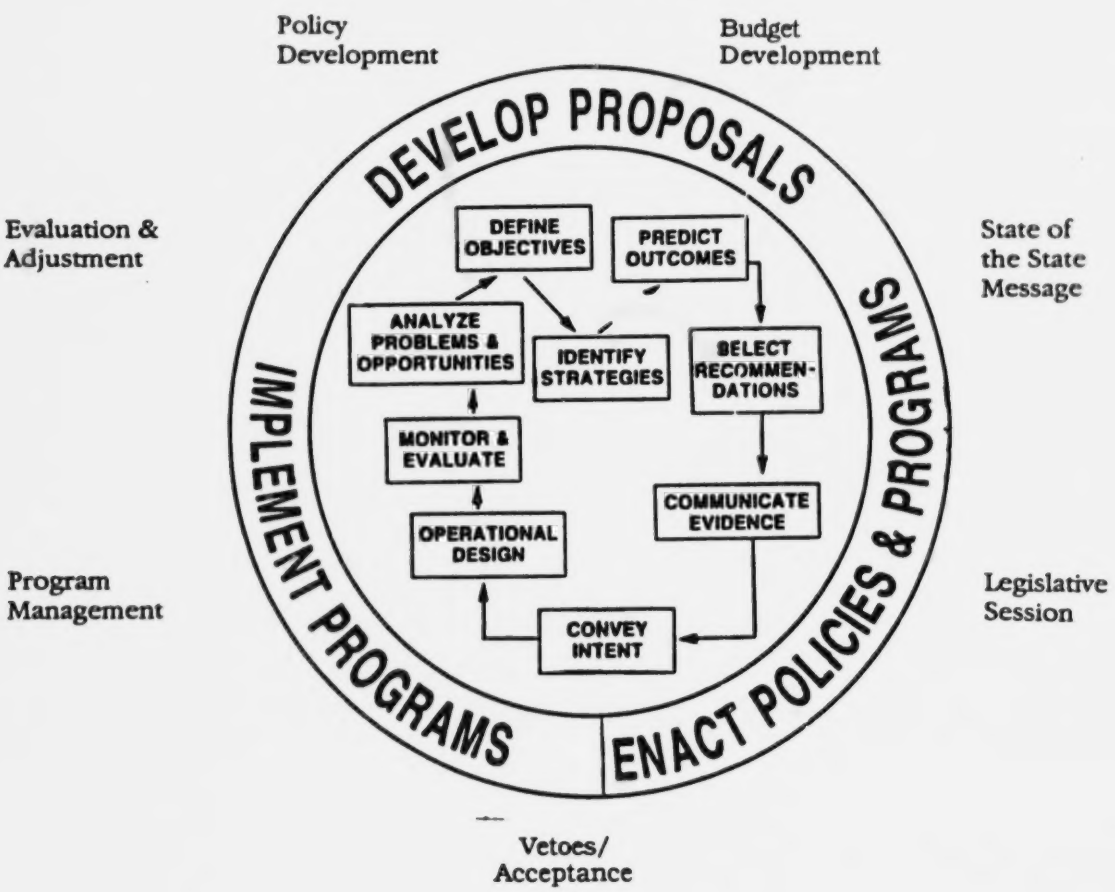
budgeting cycle. Governors' offices, legislative research offices, and planning offices in executive agencies develop proposals for consideration by top-level decision-makers three to six months prior to budget development. Once the first draft budget documents are in place, the proposal development phase is, for the most part, complete.

The governor's state-of-the-state message and the submission of major bills early in the legislative session mark the transition from the proposal development phase to the policy and program enactment phase.

The legislative session is the hallmark of the second phase. The end of the session, the signing of bills, and the final budget mark the transition to the program implementation phase. At this point operational managers take the policy and run. As state policymakers know, however, implementation can deviate significantly from the intent of the policy by sins of omission and commission. An increasingly common method of monitoring implementation is the legislatively mandated report, usually after twelve to eighteen months of implementation. Such reports or the governor's management accountability system mark the transition from

FIGURE ONE

THE POLICY CYCLE



implementation into a new cycle of planning and budgeting.

During the Academy project, each state moved through nine steps in the policy development cycle:

1. Choosing a team
2. Conducting the environmental scan
3. Defining the problems and opportunities
4. Developing policy goals and objectives
5. Choosing strategic interventions
6. Predicting outcomes
7. Planning for action
8. Taking action
9. Assessing results

Each step involved a set of activities and generated products, which, if done well, led to the accomplishment of the next step. States had to overcome pitfalls associated with each step.

Each step is described below along with the optimum outcome, state teams efforts to complete the step, and lessons learned from the project. As teams progressed through steps one through four, they were encouraged to consider the following issues:

- What is the economic and demographic environment in your state?
- How should literacy be defined and measured?
- What overall policy goals are state leaders, particularly the governor, attempting to achieve?
- Who is most in need of literacy services? Which target groups are the most important to assess and move along the literacy continuum?
- What outcomes do you want these groups to achieve? Where on the continuum do you want them to move?

Step One: Choosing The Team

The first activity, not usually thought of as a step, is the selection of those who will work on the development of a policy. States were given guidance by CSPA on team composition. The team had to have senior-level decision-makers with mandated representation from the governor's Office, the state adult education system, and JTPA.

Optimum Outcome

Today, state-level policy requires development by senior-level team representatives of many relevant sectors of state government. Problems are too complex to lend themselves to solution by one agency alone. Solutions are so complex that they generally impact on several agencies at the state, regional, and local levels. A well-constructed team has:

- Representation from all relevant agencies, departments and sectors, including the private sector. If possible, all major stakeholders, both inside and outside government should be involved.
- Senior-level decision-makers who can effect redirection of agencies and departments and commit resources. A senior advisor from the governor's office is essential. Senior staff from the legislature are also needed.
- Individuals knowledgeable about the problem.
- Individuals knowledgeable about state and local programs already in place to address the problem.
- One or two staff members who can provide the "glue" for the team between meetings: convene meetings, prepare materials, provide continuity.

State Team Efforts

Ten states assembled teams for the Academy. Seven states were able to meet all the criteria

described above, with the exception of private sector involvement. The remaining three were unable to secure consistent involvement of senior staff members from their governor's offices. This had serious consequences for their ability to produce effective policies that were implemented. One of these states dropped out of the process altogether. Four state teams had private sector/employer involvement. This greatly enhanced the team's ability to develop a broadly accepted policy.

One team lacking private sector involvement experienced serious difficulties in defining the problem, as discussed later under step three.

Lessons Learned

A well-constructed team is critical to the success of a policy development effort. In particular, if senior staff from the governor's office are not closely involved, the policy is in grave danger of being stillborn. Private sector involvement provides a much needed outside perspective and, often, the push to get agencies to work together. The four states with private sector/employer involvement produced strong policies with effective implementation: Michigan, Virginia, Florida, and Missouri.

Step Two: Conducting the Environmental Scan

An environmental scan precedes the definition of a problem. A proper scan ensures that the definition of a problem and the strategies designed to solve it will reflect the unique situation of the state and its localities.

In this step policymakers review existing data or collect new information that will answer the following questions:

- What are the key elements of the current environment that are relevant to this issue? The following categories should be scanned:
  - population affected
  - consumer/client/student attitudes
  - attitudes/understanding of business/employers
  - provider characteristics
  - governmental attitudes
  - general economic conditions – including labor force analysis
  - political considerations
- Which of these elements are most critical to the issue?
- Which of the most critical elements act as facilitators and which as impediments to either a consensus that the issue is of high priority or progress toward resolving the problem?
- How may the environment differ in the future?
- What forces are at work that might affect key elements in the future environment?
- How could future forces change the nature of the issue and the types of approaches that could be adopted?

Optimum Outcome

A thorough environmental scan can be very lengthy. It is well documented by data or anecdotal information. A thorough scanning process builds a base of agreement among all stakeholders and provides the foundation for the second step in the policy development cycle. Preparing the scan as a team exposes individual member's assumptions and values as well as biases. The process promotes debate early on when resolution and compromise are possible, before team members have become committed to particular solutions.

State Team Efforts

All ten states prepared good scans, in spite of a tendency to rush discussion of solutions. The scans reflected the unique situations in each state. One emphasized an acute labor shortage; another a high dropout rate in rural areas; a

third, the governor's concern with rising costs of dependency in his state.

Some teams, however, invested more energy in documenting their scans with data. This effort paid dividends when teams later prepared their problem statements and developed measurable policy objectives. In this step, state teams had to confront the difficulty of measuring the literacy problem within their states. Some states decided to make estimates based on school completion data from the U.S. Census; some states drew estimates from the NAEP study; some states looked at the state estimates drawn by the U.S. Department of Education from the Census English Language Proficiency Survey (ELPS). At least one state decided to defer the issue of measurement for the immediate future and incorporate into their two-year action plan a strategy for a state-sponsored, NAEP-like study. For a thorough discussion of the measurement issues confronted by states and suggested solutions see *Enhancing Adult Literacy: A Policy Guide*.[16]

Lessons Learned

A thorough environmental scan leads to 1) a clearly defined set of problems and opportunities; and 2) a cohesive team. Scans based on data rather than opinions and prejudices lead to stronger problem statements and more cohesive teams. Team members were surprised to discover as they conducted their scans, that their perceptions of the problem differed. One member viewed literacy primarily from an economic perspective; another thought of literacy programs as volunteer efforts to teach people to read. As they analyzed the situation in their state, they were able to discard prejudices not based on fact and to fit the pieces together into a whole.

Step Three: Defining Problems and Opportunities

A problem exists when there is a perceived difference between expectations and reality. Is the state's workforce prepared for the jobs of the future? Do welfare recipients have entry-level skills that meet employers' expectations?

After conducting the scan, team members struggled to accurately define the problem. They asked themselves the following questions: What is the problem? How do we know it exists? What is the evidence? Whose problem is it? Who are the stakeholders? How serious is it? What are the quantitative dimensions? Is the problem likely to get better or worse? What are the underlying causes? What are related complicating factors? What priority should be assigned to this problem in comparison with others?

At the same time they analyzed the problem, the teams attempted to identify opportunities. An opportunity occurs when circumstances appear to combine favorably to move you toward your objective. Questions which help to identify opportunities include the following: Is there any "good news" in connection with this issue? Is anyone benefitting from the problem? A problem often persists because some benefit from its existence while others do not. Who would benefit if the problem were solved? Are unexpected alliances possible? If opportunities exist, how risky are they? What are the chances that taking advantage of an opportunity may involve a detour or may not pay off?

Optimum Outcome

The expected outcome of Academy I is a problem statement. A problem statement begins with a description of the general geographic, economic, and demographic profile of the state – information surfaced in the scan. The core of the problem statement is a specific description of the problem (with documenting numbers) and information on the underlying causes of the problem. A problem statement is more useful in building strategies if it includes a discussion of factors that complicate the issue, or which create opportunities. Major stakeholders in the issue should be considered. Finally, a strong problem statement relates the problem to the concerns of

senior-level policymakers and points toward a goal.

State Team Efforts

The nine problem statements had many similarities. All states cited a growing disparity between the literacy levels of certain segments of their adult population and the skills needed by adults to seek and obtain jobs. All mentioned low literacy levels as a barrier to advancement for their dependent populations. Many states focused on low levels of state funding of literacy services and the lack of a coherent system of literacy and employment and training services as barriers.

Florida's problem statement emphasized:

> ...a critical adult population group which crosses the urban and rural distinction. This group is composed of people who lack the functional literacy skills (0-8 grade level achievement) necessary to participate in Florida's economic growth opportunities.

Idaho's problem statement stressed two facts:

> Statistics indicate that within Idaho's dislocated worker population and economically disadvantaged population...more than 50 percent...does not have a high school diploma and needs basic skills training.
>
> Compounding this problem is the fact that Idaho's investment in public schooling is at the low end of the scale nationwide. Its investment in Adult Basic Education is approximately $8 per adult served.

Tennessee's problem statement emphasized cultural barriers:

> One third of Tennessee's adult population has been left behind. The old cultural attitudes that little or no education is sufficient to carry one through a lifetime of productivity have clashed with our need to develop and sustain a flexible, continually improving workforce....Fifty thousand Tennesseans lack the basic skills to read, write, comprehend and survive in business or industrially based training programs.

Massachusetts's problem statement was future oriented:

> While many take comfort in our state's 1986 unemployment rate of 3.6 percent, there are ominous clouds on the horizon. Continued economic growth and prosperity will depend on a labor force that can keep pace with the accelerated technological challenges of our new economy. However, the educational level of the existing and potential workforce for today and for the year 2000 raises grave concern about our ability to meet this challenge.

The problem statement went on to target specific populations that "are not able to participate in and contribute to the economic life of Massachusetts":

- More than 200,000 newcomers from other countries;
- At least 50,000 young men (ages 16-25) who are out of school and out of work in our major cities;
- 80,000 welfare recipients, at least half of whom lack a high school diploma;
- Thousands of dislocated and potentially dislocated workers; and
- Thousands more men and women working in low-level, low-skill jobs, whose wages do not lift them out of poverty.

As these examples illustrate, teams benefitted from Academy I sessions which focused on employment as the context for literacy policy. The states began to use a functional definition of literacy and to target populations at different functional levels on the literacy continuum.

Lessons Learned

A thorough, well-documented problem statement will yield: 1) a rich set of strategies; and 2) a team committed to find solutions. A well-analyzed and defined statement is worth the time and effort. If consensus is built around the problem definition, it is easier to agree on particular solutions. The problem definition points to specific policy goals and objectives. Information on opportunities and stakeholders sets the stage for specific strategies.

A poorly defined problem statement is the most common pitfall at this point in the Academy process. The road to effective problem resolution is littered with incomplete or incorrect problem analyses based on insufficient data or poor logic. There are reasons for this. Good data are hard to find in the human resources area. Policymakers are often on a fast track to solve an imminent crisis. Research is not performed due to time, staff, or financial constraints.

One participating state team had difficulty in documenting its problem. In fact, because the state experienced a high secondary school graduation rate, one team member was not sure there was a problem. While the economy of the state was stagnant and was expected to shift, expertise on the future economic direction of the state was not present on the team. Neither was there strong representation from the private sector. In the problem statement, the state failed to make a clear and compelling connection between an obvious population in need (20,000 recent immigrants with limited English proficiency) and planned future economic growth. The weakness, early in the process, created difficulties later for the team.

Step Four: Setting Policy Goals and Objectives

The policy goal(s) is a broad statement of the ultimate purpose of the policy. Its accomplishment usually stretches well into the future and is something for which the administration strives.

Policy objectives are specific, outcome-oriented, and lead to the intended results of the policy goal. They can be short term (12 months), medium term (12-24 months), or longer term. In defining policy objectives, team members seek to answer the following questions: What outcomes move the state closer to the achievement of its goals? What specific objectives will address the problem? What is the relative importance of achieving various objectives? Whose interest will be served by meeting or not meeting these objectives? Finally, how realistic are the various objectives: What is the probability of achieving agreement on the objectives? Can the objectives be achieved with anticipated resources? Are there any givens or constraints in achieving the desired objectives?

Optimum Outcomes

A good policy goal is broad, yet specific. It turns the problem statement inside out by stating a positive vision of the future. Even more important, however, is a set of measurable, outcome-oriented policy objectives. Outcome-oriented objectives focus the policy on results not process. Attending to results enables agencies and departments whose service delivery mechanisms vary greatly to work together to solve the problem. Measurable policy objectives prepare the state to assess results at the appropriate time.

State Team Efforts

The policy goals of every state stressed improving the states' workforce through literacy enhancement. A few states also focused on improving quality of life for all citizens. Several states targeted priority groups for services. Virginia proposed three goals: one on workforce

readiness, one on access to services; one on increased system accountability.

Across states, policy objectives included improving high school retention rates, raising literacy levels of certain targeted populations such as welfare recipients, raising public awareness and private sector involvement, expanding literacy services to underserved populations and geographical areas, building connections between literacy and employment and training services, and creating accountability systems.

The goals and objectives of the Michigan and Missouri teams offer excellent examples.

The state of **Michigan's** policy document was heavily oriented toward enhancing jobs and productivity. The policy goal was broad, yet focused and specific:

> The state of Michigan is committed to helping its people to master the new realities of economic change. Resources must be focused to offer at least one million people the opportunity to acquire or improve minimum basic skills needed to win the jobs of tomorrow.

The policy objectives were specific, outcome-oriented, and measurable:

> The State of Michigan will, by 1990, improve the workforce literacy skills of 500,000 adults, and at least 1,000,000 adults by the next decade, as measured on a continuum of skills, to meet current and predicted Michigan occupational needs.
>
> By 1988, the State of Michigan, working closely with the private sector, will identify the number and kinds of jobs that will be available in the 1990s and beyond, identify the minimum skills required for those jobs along a continuum, and match those skills with a measurement standard that will allow public and private literacy efforts to define outcomes, set goals, and measure progress.

Missouri developed a policy with a dual focus: prevention and remediation.

> Missouri is committed to providing opportunities for its citizens to experience productive lives. This commitment extends to:
>
> - providing basic skills training and job training to allow Missourians to obtain productive employment. This includes AFDC payees, displaced workers, high school dropouts, and persons incarcerated and under the supervision of the criminal justice system, many of whom lack skills and access to the workforce.
> - pooling federal, state, local, and private resources to help working individuals develop their skills to meet changing demands of the workplace.

The team's objectives were specific and measurable:

> By 1995, Missouri public school will increase the persistence to graduation rate by 6 percent – from 74 percent to 80 percent.
>
> By 1989, Missouri will ensure basic education skills training for 250 individuals where such training is not now being provided, in at least 25 sites in order to maintain and/or upgrade employment. The sites will serve agribusiness, manufacturing, and service industries.

Lessons Learned

A policy that contains outcome-oriented, measurable policy objectives is much more likely to be successfully implemented than one

without. Without policy objectives, team members are back at square one with no agreement on where the policy is headed if a strategy or program is defeated in the political process. With a clearly defined policy goal and objectives, they can develop new, politically acceptable strategies that lead to the same outcomes.

Several teams produced vague and unclear policy goals at Academy I. Policy objectives were confused with strategies or programmatic/ operational objectives.

The following goal and policy objectives illustrate this difficulty:

> *Goal*:
>
> This state is committed to helping all citizens to join in strengthening the state's economy. In order to do so, we will focus the resources of business and industry, volunteer organizations, and public agencies to provide literacy and basic skills training for the segments of its population requiring assistance.
>
> *Objectives*:
>
> Increase the average rate of student retention by 1992.
>
> New joint ventures will be created between business/ industry and service providers to offer literacy and basic skills training that will enable under-skilled workers to adapt to the changing demands of the workforce.
>
> Offer literacy training to those individuals seeking to improve their life skills and citizenship skills.

These goals and objectives are not "wrong." They contain good ideas and approaches. However, they are less useful in clearly stating the purpose and intended outcomes of the policy. How will this particular state know if under-skilled workers are able to adapt to changing workforce demands? If joint ventures are not created, has their policy failed? The second objective could be rephrased to be more measurable and outcome-oriented:

> 500 under-skilled workers, with a skill equivalency of 8th grade or less, will be trained to meet employer basic skills standards, as defined by...

This rephrasing emphasizes a particular target population and outcome. The objective also identifies information gaps which the state must fill to actually implement the policy.

Why did some states experience difficulty with this step? Several states lacked data in their scans and problem statements. Their teams lacked expertise, and they could not or would not commit staff time to produce the data. Vague problem statements lead to vague policy objectives.

Many teams could not resolve their internal debate over stressing client outcomes versus service delivery objectives. Some service providers simply did not feel responsible for ensuring client outcomes and would not allow them included in the policy objectives. Others felt worried about being held accountable for results they were not confident they could control. Teams headed by a service provider with this point of view experienced more difficulty than teams headed by someone from the governor's office or a non-service provider. But all teams experienced some discomfort targeting numbers in their objectives – what were the political implications for the governor if the objective was not achieved?

Strong participation of JTPA team members was critical at this point in the process. They had experience in being held accountable for outcomes. In their opinion, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages. If an objective was not achieved, reasons why could be documented. Evaluation data often suggested how the objective should be revised or what program aspects should be strengthened to achieve it. If an objective was achieved, all par-

ties could take credit. Justification existed for continued resource allocation. The Massachusetts team had strong representation from JTPA and economic development. The team developed a set of very clear, targeted, measurable objectives. When several of their strategies went awry, the team continued to build support statewide for its policy objectives and was able to maintain momentum on the initiative. In general, teams that developed measurable, outcome-oriented policy objectives were more successful in implementing their policies than teams that did not.

Step Five: Choosing Strategic Interventions

A strategy is a set of specific actions or programs combined to achieve a defined outcome. A strategy is NOT a single program or an operational plan. For example, a marketing strategy is a set of actions which may include: 1) focus groups with consumers of services; 2) technical assistance to providers of services; 3) a media campaign; 4) targeted public service announcements; 5) the Governor's speeches and appearances; 6) product or service re-design. A regional strategy may involve: 1) a review of existing state policy to determine barriers to regional innovation; 2) the creation of regional committees; 3) the development of incentives to transform existing regional organizations or to encourage them to undertake new tasks; 4) funding of regionally developed projects; and 5) regional training and technical assistance.

To generate strategies, team members inventory existing programs and efforts, research programs tried elsewhere, and brainstorm innovative approaches. Once a list is developed, they combine programs and actions together to form separate strategies to achieve their policy objectives.

Optimum Outcome

States do well to develop several strategies tailored to their particular objectives. If one strategy fails, they can move to implement a second. Strategies should involve all relevant agencies, departments, and stakeholders, including the private sector. This builds alliances and demonstrates the importance of solving the problem.

All strategies should pass a plausibility/feasibility test. Plausibility answers these questions: If this strategy is pursued, will the objective be achieved? What is the probability that a strategy will accomplish this objective? Has the strategy worked elsewhere? in other states? on a pilot basis? What does the research indicate? What does common sense say? Feasibility answers the question: Are resources (time, money, skill) available to implement the strategy?

The interrelationships of programs within strategies should be considered. How can agencies support one another's efforts? Do they conflict? How can conflicts be resolved? What mix or grouping of strategies is needed to achieve objectives? What special skills and experiences can different stakeholders bring to the solution of the problem? Strategies can be packaged artfully to improve their chances of acceptance or implementation.

State Team Efforts

The teams produced a rich set of strategies which fall into six broad categories. For detailed information see Chapter Five.

- *Marketing*: The strategies are broad and/or targeted to particular populations. They are designed to increase resources and/or utilization of services.
- *Funding/Resource Development*: Strategies focus on increasing state and/or private funding for literacy services and building volunteer corps.
- *Improving access to services/services expansion*: Strategies are targeted at both geographic areas and specific populations.
- *Interagency collaboration*: Strategies seek to build linkages among literacy and JTPA

and private sector employment and training programs as well as with agencies with populations needing literacy services and providers.

- *Service improvement/innovation*: Many strategies mention public/private-developed or sponsored workforce literacy programs. Others include development of stronger training and technical assistance services for literacy providers.

Accountability. The strategies build integrated accountability systems for literacy and employment and training services that stress functional literacy outcomes.

The Missouri and Michigan teams developed comprehensive and well-balanced sets of strategies to support their goals and objectives. Note that several strategies are proposed, and they are designed to involve all stakeholders.

The Missouri team focused on better utilization of existing resources and incentives to accomplish its objectives. The list included:

- Public information campaign targeted at different audiences including state agencies, business, and labor.
- Literacy foundation developed through private contributions to fund innovative activities to complement/supplement existing programs.
- Coordinated funding of literacy and literacy-related programs using existing resources such as JTPA, ABE, Wagner-Peyser, Carl Perkins, Vocational Education, and the Library Services and Construction Act.
- Pilot workplace literacy programs in 25 sites to up-grade the workforce of existing businesses. The workplace literacy effort was to be jointly developed by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Literacy, the State Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Education.
- Exploration of incentives (such as training subsidies or tax credits) for employers to upgrade basic skills of current employees or displaced workers.

Michigan's final policy, *Countdown 2000*, initiated a number of new efforts. The state's policy goal – building a competitive workforce – required comprehensive strategies that restructured the underpinnings of the literacy and employment and training systems:

- Strengthening the skill-building system. This strategy included the following actions:
  - adopting new definitions for "literacy" and "work readiness";
  - establishing a professionally staffed public/private policy board to oversee the design and implementation of an integrated, outcome-oriented adult training, education, and supportive services system;
  - simplifying access to all adult training and educational services through the Michigan Opportunity Card.
- Supporting the skill-building system. This strategy included:
  - fostering joint investments that encourage individuals, the public sector, and the private sector to participate in building Michigan's workforce skills by 1) creating incentives, 2) encouraging partnerships, and 3) establishing a statewide clearinghouse for partnerships and incentives;
  - creating a Human Resources Research and Development Institute as a joint venture between the state and the private sector.
- Marketing the skill-building system. This strategy included:
  - initiating a public information/marketing campaign from the highest level of state government that promotes a new

workforce training and education system that is based on individual choice, life-long learning, and accountability.

Lessons Learned

A policy that includes two more more strategies involving all major stakeholders is more likely to be successfully implemented over time. Several state teams generated weak strategies. One team could not agree on more than one strategy. The difficulties for this team started at the problem definition step: one critical team member had never agreed a problem existed. Naturally, he was not going to commit agency resources to a solution.

Designing a policy with only one strategy leaves the entire initiative vulnerable to attack and defeat if the strategy goes down in political flames or does not produce results as expected.

One state built its policy on a the creation of a governor's task force. The strategy was a good one. The task force, staffed by the governor's office was to raise awareness of the literacy problem, include the issue of literacy on the state's economic development policy agenda, improve the data base on literacy, and define priority groups for literacy services.

The appointed task force became a steering committee for three work groups. But when staff in the governor's office had to deal with several unexpected but pressing problems, two of the work groups floundered. Exclusive reliance on only one strategy left the initiative vulnerable. After this happened, the team had to struggle to maintain momentum on its initiative.

Another team's action plan did not systematically involve the programs or efforts of other agencies and departments. This was caused, in part, by the team leader's inability during the problem definition stage to view the problem from different perspectives and to hear other stakeholders' points of view. That state was able to implement its plan, but it lost an opportunity for major change. When literacy appropriations went before the state legislature, that team leader did not have strong friends and allies who had already committed resources to achieve the stated objectives.

Another team lacked a healthy list of either new or existing programs and actions to be combined into strategies. The team, one of the few without representation from the Governor's office, also lacked consistent leadership. Team members would not commit staff resources to research existing state and local programs or creatively brainstorm beyond a few good ideas.

Step Six: Predicting Outcomes

This is the most underutilized step in the policy process. It is frequently passed over due to time, data constraints, and habit. Skipping this step, however, can lead to unanticipated negative impacts.

"Education reform," as implemented in many states in the early-mid 1980s, included actions such as increasing mandatory curriculum requirements and increased use of standardized tests to determine student and teacher performance. In general, these actions accomplished the desired policy objectives. However, in many places they had an unanticipated negative impact: dropout rates increased. Some education experts have argued that education reform accelerated the "push-out" phenomenon in high schools.

Optimum Outcome

States are wise to estimate the impact of policy implementation – especially successful implementation – on the environment as well as the problem. "What if" questions are a good tool. What if student standardized test scores are used to evaluate teacher performance? How will this impact the teacher, the student who achieves low scores, or the student who the teacher thinks will achieve a low score? What if the state increases mandatory curriculum requirements? How will this impact vocational education enrollment or the relationship of special education to general education cur-

riculum? What if a series of workplace literacy programs is announced for specific companies? How will the employees feel about needing a "literacy program"? Will it make them want to sign up? What if literacy providers are mandated to use performance-based contracts? How will this affect their ability and desire to serve individuals with low literacy levels? How will it impact on their corps of volunteer trainers? Will any providers close up shop?

A final check of underlying assumptions is also useful. What are team members assuming will happen? For example, will mandating local literacy plans automatically ensure interagency coordination? Will improving a student's school attendance lead to improved academic performance?

State teams should review their environmental scan with specific strategies in mind and define the underlying assumptions. A thorough review will enable them to predict at least the major financial, systemic, programmatic, and human consequences of their strategic decisions.

State Efforts

The Academy seeks to accomplish this step through faculty and peer critique of state team products throughout the process. This experience is challenging for team members. Most resist the process and respond defensively to probing questions. Yet, by an Academy's end, teams have come to see the value of such an exercise. Virginia, for example, took numerous questions on the impact of its dual public/private literacy structure. Questions were raised about the potential for duplication and unhealthy competition. As a consequence, the Commonwealth established strong communication lines, clear reporting structures, and specific workplans to minimize difficulties.

The Florida team was challenged on its approach of mandating local literacy plans. Was the team assuming that a mandated plan would guarantee effective services to the populations most in need? If so, it could be seriously mistaken. The team responded by further specifying and strengthening its guidelines for local plan development.

The Michigan team envisioned a consumer-driven and customer-sensitive skill-building system. What if adults *wanted* to invest in their own futures and plan for lifelong education and training (a long-term goal of the team)? If they did, they would need to access a "user-friendly" education and training system accountable for results. Such as system must be based on responsibility shared by many stakeholders in the public and private sectors. The Michigan Opportunity Card is a concrete result of the state's efforts to envision and predict outcomes.

Lessons Learned

States/team members who are open to critical reviews from faculty and peers and who test their own assumptions and estimate impacts produce more effective policies. One team had difficulty thinking strategically. It developed an excellent list of separate programs and action steps which could be carried through in a 12-18 month period. The team was challenged at Academies I and II to broaden its thinking, envision a future five years away, predict the long-term consequences of action or inaction. The team's inability to do so resulted in a short-circuited initiative – short-term return but no major funding increases in the state legislature. The team had to regroup and lay new groundwork for a longer term return on investment.

Step Seven: Planning for Action

If predicting outcomes is the step least practiced by states in the policy development process, selecting recommendations and communicating evidence is the most practiced. Together with building an accountability system these steps constitute action planning.

Potential strategies are compared to each other on funding levels, time till complete implementation, impact on urban/rural areas, ability to generate positive press, degree of interagency

collaboration required, and private sector involvement. How do alternative approaches compare in costs and benefits? How do they compare in the level of certainty of assumptions and predictions? Has the time value of money been taken into account? How do they compare in terms of who wins and loses? in demands on leadership, management and staff resources? in demands on political capital?

Optimum Outcome

An action plan details the programs, resources, and operational objectives necessary to support the chosen strategies and assigns timeframes and responsible parties. Successful action planning has four main components: 1) making decisions; 2) gaining support; 3) securing commitment; and 4) ensuring accountability. Successful plans include:

- Significant stakeholder involvement (i.e. responsibility for specific activities or programs);
- Detailed political communication plans or marketing strategies for gaining support, especially from major stakeholders who could not be significantly involved in the action plan, including consumers of services;
- Staff support necessary to carry out the plan within each agency/department and to provide long-term continuity;
- A clearly defined role for senior-level policymakers, especially the governor;
- An accountability system: that is, a clear statement of the expected outcomes/results of each step in the plan and the measurement of those results;
- Specific assignment of responsibilities and time frames;
- Back-up action steps if first choice activities are not accomplished.

State Efforts

All states left Academy II with an action plan, but the plans varied greatly in complexity and specificity. Four states designed comprehensive, integrated approaches to their problems. In general, these plans met the criteria outlined above. Three states planned special interagency projects or programs including public awareness campaigns; literacy task forces; and expanded ABE, workforce literacy and/or high school retention programs. Two states developed plans for strengthening interagency understanding of the problem and laying the groundwork for change.

Virginia, Massachusetts, and Michigan were among the states that developed comprehensive action plans. The Commonwealths of Virginia and Massachusetts developed unique structures and approaches to gaining support and securing commitment from major stakeholders. Accountability was a major focus of Michigan's initiative.

Mrs. Jeannie Baliles, First Lady of Virginia, spearheaded the literacy initiative for the **Commonwealth of Virginia**. She was determined to gain the support of both the state government and the private sector. To gain commitment, the state designed a dual organizational structure for implementation of their literacy policy:

- A State Adult Literacy Committee (SALC) composed of agency representatives appointed by the Governor and staffed by a State Literacy Director; and
- The Virginia Literacy Foundation (VLF) headed by an executive director and composed of literacy providers, fund-raisers, prominent citizens, legislators, and employers.

SALC was responsible for gaining support for the initiative and its implementation from government agencies at state and regional levels. VLF was responsible for coordinating efforts in both the employer community and

among private, non-profit literacy providers, for fund-raising in the private sector/foundation community, and providing grants to private, non-profit literacy providers.

Together, SALC and VLF planned to design and implement a marketing plan with separate messages targeted at employers, pregnant and parenting teens, and unemployed youth, ages 17-25. SALC and VLF planned to jointly develop and train the regional literacy coordinating committees that would gain community support and commitment.

VLF committed to raise funds for discretionary grants to private, non-profit literacy providers. They wanted to support targeted programs that could move priority populations such as teenage and welfare mothers, along the literacy continuum to an 8th grade equivalency. VLF and SALC took joint responsibility for increasing technical assistance to public and private literacy programs serving priority populations. This included providing resources in curriculum development, research, materials design, instructional delivery, and evaluation.

The **Massachusetts** team relied on the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign to gain support and secure commitment. The Campaign, whose director and deputy chaired the Academy team, is a highly visible interagency and inter-sector group appointed by the Governor. Its plan, *Workforce 2000*, contains eight major strategies, half of which involve expansion of adult literacy services. The expansion is targeted to the achievement of specific literacy outcomes for target populations, such as:

- 5,000 new seats in intensive, community-based basic literacy (0-4 grade level equivalency) programs for AFDC recipients, who need a foundation of basic skills to qualify for entry-level job training and employment;
- 7,500 new seats for young men, aged 16-24, who have dropped out of school without sufficient skills to qualify for employment.

The team directly confronted the issue of cost, stating that the current average expenditure per student was so low that it "has impoverished the adult basic education network," and requested a large new appropriation for literacy.

The Campaign sought support for not just the appropriation. They worked to gain commitment to their policy goals in several ways. First, they established a Literacy Volunteer Corps. The Corps not only increased the availability of some literacy services, but also broadened the constituency for enhanced literacy services.

Second, they strengthened political coalitions, which included provider agencies, advocacy groups, state agencies, and the legislature. Thirdly, they developed a strategy to involve business leaders more directly in building and supporting the initiative. The Governor actively urged private sector involvement.

The team identified the major state agencies responsible for literacy and support services by target group and sought specific support from them for *Workforce 2000*. The Department of Education agreed to sponsor five regional meetings on the policy and to initiate three taskforces on program effectiveness, staff development, and funding. A state interagency group, staffed by the Campaign, committed to 1) coordinate a cross-agency request-for-proposal process for literacy providers; 2) provide uniform data collection; 3) set uniform standards for program effectiveness and client outcomes; and 4) conduct comprehensive regional planning on literacy.

Accountability was a major focus of the **Michigan** action plan. The team committed to:

> Create an accountability system that will apply fiscal, programmatic, and related standards appropriate to each program in such a way that progress along the work-readiness continuum can be tracked and programs can be enhanced

or revised, as necessary, to achieve established objectives.

Michigan's action plan connected individual assessment, program evaluation, and policy accountability. First, the state planned to develop an individual assessment instrument to measure work-readiness competencies, as defined by employer requirements.

The state would use this test to conduct a baseline study of workforce competencies of Michigan's existing labor force. The study would form the basis of a performance-based reporting system for all literacy service providers. The accountability system would require all appropriate education and employment and training agencies to administer pre- and post-workforce competency tests on a continuing basis to all their clients, and it would establish a uniform set of standards to measure outcomes and ensure an attractive return on investment.

The team planned to support the system with training and technical assistance to literacy providers and to create a Michigan Human Resource Development Research Institute to take the lead in research and evaluation of work-readiness enhancement programs. The Governor's Cabinet Council on Human Investment took responsibility for spearheading the entire effort, but separate agencies took lead responsibility for implementing portions of the plan.

A strong accountability system was critical to Michigan's long-range vision of a consumer-driven skill-building system. If consumers are to make educated choices about literacy and employment and training services, they must have information on a provider's track-record. The State of Michigan was already spending a great deal of money on its education/ employment and training system. The accountability system would ensure that these funds were spent on results.

Lessons Learned

A fully developed action plan leads to effective implementation. Some teams did better than others in planning for action. Barriers to success included:

- **Lack of leadership on the team:** In one team with weak commitment from the Governor's office, agencies were reluctant to assume leadership. The attitude was "Why don't *you* do it?"
- **An imbalance in team membership between politically knowledgeable members and technically knowledgeable members:** Without information from those who understood both literacy and JTPA programs, one team's proposals lacked depth and "reality." Another team, lacking a strong political perspective, did not plan to market its initiative strongly enough to gain necessary support from other stakeholders.
- **Team unwillingness to work on the details:** Interagency collaboration is hard work. Detailing a two-year action plan is more demanding than performing an environmental scan. It is more precise than defining the problem. Designing solutions that have a good chance of working is less fun and synergistic than brainstorming good ideas that might work. Team members who felt energized and optimistic at Academy I felt fatigued, even discouraged at some points in Academy II.
- **Inability to listen to different perspectives:** Listening well to each other's perspectives on and objections to proposed solutions is necessary to reach the full commitment of all team members. One team with very divergent views was strongly encouraged by facilitators to listen to all members. A stronger, better integrated action plan was the result.

Step Eight: Taking Action

Conveying intent to the legislature and those responsible for implementation as well as actual implementation are important steps in taking action. The governor's state-of-the-state message and the legislative session are obvious activities. Key decision-makers, those who must fund or implement the strategies, must be convinced. The commitment of stakeholders, state agencies, interest groups, providers, and consumers must be secured.

What information will be needed to support the implementation process? How can information be organized for greatest impact on the legislature, heads of executive agencies, interest groups, the public? Who will take the lead in implementation? What should program managers do?

Optimum Outcomes

Complete implementation on schedule is the obvious sign of a successfully completed step eight in the policy development cycle. Actions should be well coordinated and build momentum. As the examples below illustrate, state approaches to taking action may vary in style and comprehensiveness.

State Efforts

All states in the Academy implemented some components of their policies and action plans. Most states implemented major portions of their plans. Examples from three states illustrate the variety of approaches to taking action.

The State of **Michigan** chose a highly visible, formal route. The Governor's Cabinet Council on Human Investment, which spearheaded the initiative, produced a major, high-gloss document, *Countdown 2000*. Agency directors from education, human services, and labor were closely involved.

The Cabinet Council secured the involvement of well-known chief executive officers from the business community. The Governor held a national press conference unveiling the Plan, the Michigan Opportunity Card, and the Michigan Human Investment Fund. As of June 1988, implementation activities were in full swing.

The State of **Florida** chose a less visible, formal route. The state legislature had mandated the development of a statewide literacy plan to enhance adult literacy. The team decided to use the mandate as the vehicle for developing an interagency adult literacy policy. The policy and plan were designed primarily by staff from the governor's office and executive agencies with heavy involvement by program administrators in education, and some involvement of legislative staff. Top-level decision-makers were not closely involved, but were informed as the project progressed.

The Florida Adult Literacy Plan was ultimately approved by the Governor and the State Board of Education and signed by the Secretaries of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Labor and Corrections. The Plan created the blueprint for local, interagency literacy plans, required of Local Education Authorities by the State Department of Education. The local literacy plans, due January 1989, will be jointly reviewed by the Departments of Education, HRS, and Labor for compliance with the guidelines established in the state plan.

The **Tennessee** plan was largely driven by the Director of Adult Education who had the confidence of the state commissioner of education and direct access to the Governor. The plan, calling for the expansion of the literacy services system, remained an internal, informal document. Although plan development was a team effort, the Director of Adult Education took major responsibility for implementation.

Lessons Learned

Effective action is possible even with an incomplete action plan. Most states implemented major portions of their plans. Their successes are summarized in Chapter Four and detailed in Chapter Five. Only one state experienced

serious difficulty in implementation. This team encountered barriers at every step in the policy development cycle. Only three stakeholders were represented on the team. The environmental scan was lacking in detail and not well documented. The problem definition was not specific or clear. The team leader was unable to gain full team commitment to the accomplishment of the policy objectives. The team agreed on only one strategy. The action plan did not involve all major stakeholders, partly due to the lack of team commitment. Finally, members were unable to commit sufficient, in-state staff resources to carry out the action plan. The energy, dedication and abilities of the team leader could not overcome these problems.

The last step in the policy development cycle, assessing results, is presented in Chapter four.

Chapter 4: Assessing Results

SUMMARY OF STATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The complete results of the CSPA Policy Academy on Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity will not be known for another 12 to 24 months. Although it was impossible, given the scope and objectives of the Academy project, to fully monitor and evaluate the progress of the nine state teams, team leaders met six months following the completion of Academy II to share the results of their policy and planning efforts. State results are summarized below. For more detail, see the state sections that follow in Chapter Five.

The State of Florida

The Florida Adult Literacy Plan was the final product of the state's participation in the Academy project. Jointly signed by the Governor; the Commissioner of Education; and the Departments of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Labor, and Corrections, it sets clear policy objectives for the enhancement of adult literacy for jobs and productivity.

The Plan mandates the development of local, interagency literacy plans. These plans must demonstrate collaboration between Local Education Agencies (LEAs), the JTPA, and social services systems at the local level. They must address the needs of priority target groups. They must include an accountability component to track the outcomes of literacy services.

As of June 1988, the State Department of Education had established guidelines for local literacy plan development and evaluation criteria for state review of local plans. The Department conducted regional training workshops that requested the participation of local representation from the Departments of Health and Rehabilitative Services and Labor, LEAs, Private Industry Councils, and literacy volunteers. All agencies were encouraged to plan jointly at the local level.

The Florida Adult Literacy Plan represented a success for the team. Despite the differing approaches of the agencies involved and despite competing political objectives, the team produced a plan which met three out of five of its original objectives. Though a compromise, the plan contained at least in part the major requirements of team members and the agencies they represented.

The beginnings of this compromise were forged at the first Academy meeting. The process, continuing over an 18-month period, required the team to work through differences. Members could not walk away when a problem appeared. The team's efforts exemplified senior-level commitment to collaboration among the Governor and the Commissioner and the legislature. Team members from the state departments of education, health and rehabilitative services, and labor are all involved in monitoring the implementation of the Florida state plan and in reviewing local literacy plans.

As a result of Florida's involvement in the Academy, literacy as a policy issue has moved beyond the strict purview of the Department of Education and has been tied to dependency reduction and economic development. Most importantly, local school districts must now plan for enhancement of literacy services to target populations. This planning must involve in-

teragency communication and collaboration. State government has demonstrated to the local agencies that teamwork can succeed.

The State of Idaho

The Idaho team developed a practical plan. Emphasis was placed on increasing public awareness of the literacy problem, gaining senior-level attention within state government, enhancing workforce literacy, and increasing interagency and public/private collaboration.

Though the final document lacked outcome and accountability measures, the team was proud of its accomplishments. Even without top-level participation at Academy meetings, the team had moved the literacy initiative from a policy backwater into the policy mainstream by firmly connecting it to the Governor's economic development agenda. Leadership for the literacy initiative was firmly established in the Department of Employment.

Following Academy II, the team member on the Governor's Workforce 2000 Task Force was named chairman of the Task Force's sub-committee on workforce literacy. The committee met monthly and travelled throughout the state, meeting with employers, educators, and community leaders on the subject of workforce literacy. This activity constituted a public relations/awareness campaign across the state.

Academy team members attended the meetings of the Workforce Literacy Committee of the Workforce 2000 Task Force. They offered the results of their research and policy development work as well as the information and materials made available to them through the CSPA Academy. The Committee's report, published in November, 1988, accepted several of the Academy team's recommendations for action.

As a part of the Academy effort, the Department of Employment is identifying practical ways in which employment office line staff who deal with the public can identify persons who need basic skills training and encourage them to seek assistance. Typical of Idaho's practical and cost-conscious approach, the department is accomplishing this through the use of a VISTA literacy volunteer at the Boise local office of the Department of Employment. Identified methods will be used statewide.

An interagency group, representing vocational education, general education, employment, and the Idaho Private Industry Council Association met with the Academy team to develop workplace literacy programs.

Consistent with the wishes of the Governor's office, the team made the most of scarce state resources by carefully choosing priorities for action and following through in a cost-effective way: a statewide literacy teleconference with a message from the Governor, local technical assistance, a JTPA-funded literacy survey, use of a VISTA literacy volunteer, and coordination with the Workforce 2000 Taskforce.

As of June 1988, the Academy team had not accomplished implementation of all the objectives outlined in its Academy II plan, but it had made significant progress. Regional coalitions had not yet been developed; agency budgets had not yet been affected. However, public awareness had clearly risen, the Governor's commitment through the Task Force was secure, and the groundwork for new workplace literacy programs had been laid.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Massachusetts team and the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign (CLC) together produced the Massachusetts Workforce Literacy Plan and implementation strategies. The Plan, greatly influenced by the information given at Academy I, presented literacy as an economic development problem in the state. It targeted the populations most seriously affected and proposed solutions that included an ambitious increase in state funding. Implementation strategies encompassed raising awareness, promoting interagency collaboration, and

increasing accountability for results within the literacy system.

Throughout the Academy project, the challenge for the Massachusetts team and the CLC, whose executive and deputy directors headed the Academy team, was to build support for this workforce literacy expansion plan. This necessitated involvement of a number of constituency groups and agencies.

Following the completion of its plan, the CLC conducted meetings with the Governor's staff, cabinet officials, the advocacy/provider community, the state AFL-CIO Education Committee, and business leaders. Their objectives were:

- To introduce the *Workforce 2000* analysis and build a strong case for coordinated expansion of state literacy services targeted at key groups that will comprise the labor force.

- To build commitment among these groups to use the analysis, to lobby for expansion, and to gain a commitment from each agency/organization to work for the *whole plan*, not just one piece.

The Secretaries of Economic Affairs and Labor, the Commissioner of Education, the Chancellor of Higher Education, the Massachusetts Coalition of Adult Literacy (MCAL), and the AFL-CIO all publicly supported the Workforce Literacy Plan.

The Plan was featured in many news articles in the state's major newspapers and in many local papers. At the Democratic State Convention the CLC organized and staffed a Literacy Breakfast and Awareness Day.

The Campaign continued to develop interagency coordination. It expanded the team to include representation from the Board of Regents, the Library Commissioners, and "Gateway Cities." The Department of Education agreed to sponsor five regional meetings on the Plan and to initiate three taskforces on program effectiveness, staff development, and funding. The CLC and Commonwealth Futures (a policy group working on youth employment issues) planned a joint initiative on urban males, ages 16-24.

Agency stakeholders liked the Plan's organization around target groups. The Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants began to coordinate policy/planning around these target groups.

The Campaign was successful in gaining a lot of support for its literacy appropriation request. MCAL offered its support based on the Workforce Plan. Key legislators (10 of 40 Senators and 55 of 160 Representatives) sponsored a Legislative Briefing on Adult Literacy addressed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader.

As of July 1988, the Campaign had not received its requested appropriation. The Campaign's legislation (requesting a budget of $8 million) had a favorable report out of the Joint Education Committee and out of Ways and Means, but no appropriations were attached. Due to unexpected revenue shortfalls and a possible budget deficit, all expansion requests, including the $1 million set aside for literacy in the Governor's budget, were put on hold.

Sometimes the finest policy development efforts do not come to immediate fruition. The Massachusetts team had to cope with a volatile political environment, due to presidential campaign politics, and an unexpected budget situation. In spite of the difficulties encountered, the team developed a tight policy and plan. Throughout the Academy project and afterwards, the Plan remained the Campaign's guidance system, keeping it on target. It continues to accomplish elements of the plan which do not require major new appropriations. By December 1988, the Campaign, working with interagency task forces, had developed a uniform data collection process, a coordinated R.F.P. process for literacy providers, uniform standards for program effectiveness and client outcomes, and comprehensive, inter-

agency, regional planning for literacy services. In six or seven months, when the budget and the political environment change, the Campaign will try again for an appropriations increase with a proven track record and increased support.

The State of Michigan

Michigan's workforce literacy plan, *Countdown 2000,* developed and refined throughout the Academy project, is being fully implemented.

The *Countdown 2000* report was unveiled by Governor Blanchard in his January 20, 1988, State-of-the-State address. It contained eight major recommendations:

1. Adoption statewide of a new "workforce literacy" definition to drive all adult training and education programs;
2. Establishment of a public/private policy board to oversee the design and implementation of an integrated, outcome-oriented system;
3. Simplified access to the education and training system through "service accounts" that individuals can draw upon for training and education;
4. Development of a standard assessment, using the new definition, for each participant in training and education programs;
5. Joint investment of the public and private sector in the system through the encouragement of unlimited partnerships and the creation of a wide array of incentives for such partnerships;
6. Creation of a Human Resources Research and Development Institute, a public/private joint venture that would perform research, evaluate programs, and develop curricula and materials;
7. Training and technical assistance for adult training and educational providers, with emphasis on designing and delivering programs that meet the new workforce literacy definition;
8. A public information/marketing campaign from the highest level of government, promoting a new workforce training and education system based on individual choice, lifelong learning, and accountability.

Implementation of these eight recommendations rests on two key components: the Michigan Opportunity Card and the Michigan Human Investment Fund.

- **The Michigan Opportunity Card:** A wallet-sized, plastic credit card, the Michigan Opportunity Card will be available to all adults. The card will provide access to all job training and educational services. The team envisioned the Michigan Opportunity Card as a driving force to integrate existing programs, weed out ineffective programs, and coordinate the development of future programs. The card also signals a fundamental shift in public attitude by recognizing an individual's rights and responsibilities in pursuing lifelong education and training consistent with the realities of the modern economy.

- **The Michigan Human Investment Fund:** The Fund is a joint venture between the private sector and the state departments and agencies that are involved in adult training and educational programs. The members of the Fund form a board of directors to oversee and coordinate management of the entire human investment system.

  Consistent with *Countdown 2000*'s eighth recommendation, on April 21, 1988, Governor Blanchard held a news conference in Washington, D.C., announcing nationally the *Countdown 2000* report and the Michigan Opportunity Card. The following day he released the *Michigan Employability Profile*, a task force report recommended by the Iacocca/Fraser Commission which defined basic skills needed by Michigan's employers. The *Profile*

report gave credence to the new workforce literacy definition and supported the innovative direction of *Countdown 2000*.

Throughout the Academy project, the Michigan team set ambitious goals. It not only moved literacy into the policy mainstream, but it set a course for systemic change through increased accountability. This course inevitably challenged traditional methods of connecting individuals with literacy training. It also required the establishment and testing of new data systems from individual measurement to provider performance and policy accountability. Fortunately, the Governor's Cabinet Council on Human Investment (GCCHI) has been able to muster the resources, with the help of the private sector, to design this comprehensive and innovative approach.

Implementation activities are in full swing as of June 1988. Technical planning and development are proceeding. The legislature is being briefed. A procurement process for the database has been initiated. The Human Investment Fund has been established by Executive Order. Legislation is being designed to fund portions of the new human investment system. The assessment instrument, an employability skills test, is in the design phase. The plan calls for a phase-in of seven years for the entire human investment system.

Workforce literacy has become the major economic development issue in Michigan. The Academy process helped the Michigan team create *Countdown 2000* by providing critical information at the right time and by offering a process that ensured coordination and continuity of effort by all stakeholders.

The State of Missouri

The Missouri team left Academy II with a comprehensive Literacy Policy and a well-defined, two-year action plan. While the accountability component of its plan was not fully developed, the team had committed to building an accountability process. Included in the action plan were:

- Staffing the Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy, which included multi-agency, public and private membership; It was expected that the policy goals and objectives outlined by the Academy team would be incorporated into the work of the Advisory Council.
- Establishing a literacy foundation funded by the private sector;
- Creating a Literacy Volunteer Corps;
- Preparing a plan for for more effective use of all resources currently available for literacy and basic skills training including JTPA, Adult Basic Education, Wagner-Peyser, Carl Perkins, Vocational-Education, and Library Services and Construction Act funds; and
- Establishing model programs in workplace literacy, dropout prevention for at-risk youth, and literacy programs for welfare recipients.

As of December 1988, 14 of the approximately 20 action steps outlined by the team at Academy II were complete or underway. Recommendations from the Governor's Advisory Council were released in fall 1988. Literacy Investment for Tomorrow (LIFT) began funding innovative, literacy projects in early winter of 1988. The plan for more effective use of existing resources has been completed and agencies have begun model projects.

The Advisory Council on Literacy's recommendations, once approved by the Governor, will serve as the blueprint for statewide actions in literacy and the implementation of provisions will be officially tracked. These recommendations will reflect the hard work of the Academy team: uncovering the facts about literacy in Missouri; forging public and private collaboration, and securing interagency agreement on roles and responsibilities. The consensus carefully forged by the Academy team became the foundation of the Council's recommendations.

The State of North Carolina

The North Carolina team participated only in Academy I, yet the work begun there helped to produce a final product, the Report of the Governor's Commission on Literacy. In its draft recommendations three major steps were proposed:

- Creation of a North Carolina Advisory Council on Literacy. The Council should have 22 members appointed by the Governor representing the Department of Community Colleges, the North Carolina Literacy Association, business and industry, and citizens at large, as well as the president of the Community College system, the director of the North Carolina Literacy Association, the State Superintendent of Education, a state senator, and a state representative.

- Creation of a North Carolina Literacy Trust Fund to encourage private financial contributions to the literacy effort and to provide additional resources to support both public and private literacy efforts.

- Creation of an Office of Literacy in the Department of Administration to provide staff support to the Advisory Council and the Literacy Trust Fund.

The Commission recommended that the Council map existing services and resources; identify program objectives, service delivery mechanisms, numbers of persons served, and the nature of services; identify gaps in services; and analyze relationships among services to identify needs for increased coordination.

The Commission suggested six policy goals for the work of the Council and the Trust Fund:

1. Focus on the need of adult learners with specific attention to the needs of welfare recipients, high school dropouts, dislocated workers, the working poor, the unemployed, parents of at-risk youth, and workers with limited literacy skills who are employed by small businesses;
2. Enhance literacy education in the workplace;
3. Foster cooperation and coordination among state agencies and the private sector in order to get maximum impact from existing programs;
4. Increase program effectiveness and accountability;
5. Support public education reform to prevent future adult illiteracy;
6. Facilitate programs in which parents and children can jointly enhance their literacy skills.

Based on the work of the Commission, several literacy related budget items, totaling approximately $5 million and including a new Office of Literacy, were added to the Governor's proposed budget. An Office of Literacy in the Governor's Office was established in June 1988.

Funding has been found for 1) a dropout prevention program for at-risk youth; 2) eight preschool programs to pilot an intergenerational literacy program; 3) customized literacy programs provided by community colleges for small business; 4) a "Boston Compact" type program for youth ages 16-24; 5) a basic skills enhancement program for employees of state agencies; and 6) a public/private, university-based technical assistance network and resource bank for literacy professionals, volunteers, and industry needing customized literacy programs.

North Carolina designed a process, using the Academy as a starting point, to accomplish its literacy policy objectives. The state created a mechanism to facilitate public/private collaboration. It encouraged participation by the private sector. It enhanced the Governor's authority in the development of literacy policy. Finally, it redirected existing resources or found new resources for literacy programs.

The State of Tennessee

The final Tennessee Plan had thirteen objectives. They included increasing the high school retention rate; creating workforce literacy programs; creating workforce literacy subcommittees in each Private Industry Council; establishing rural literacy pilot projects; targeting public housing residents for literacy training; strengthening the continuum of literacy services; and increasing state funding for literacy by 400 percent.

In Tennessee, the Academy project strengthened the connection between literacy and jobs and productivity. The team hoped this connection would support its request to the legislature and build alliances with the business community and other state agencies. The process also helped the team to identify creative opportunities for interagency collaboration. For example, the Academy I draft plan called for the creation of Adult Education and Training Councils within each DOE district. The Academy II plan recommended, instead, the creation of literacy subcommittees within each existing Private Industry Council, which already functioned as a forum for education/business collaboration.

Firm numbers of individuals to be served are still absent from the action plan. Although outcome levels of literacy proficiency are set for each target group, the plan does not specify how these outcomes will be measured or how programs will be held accountable for outcomes.

The team, under the direction of the Executive Director of Adult Education, has successfully implemented major portions of the plan. County-based literacy services were expanded to statewide coverage, a significant achievement. Workplace literacy programs were begun in 25 major businesses. Literacy programs were established in inner-city public housing projects. "The Sequoia Award" was created to honor communities making significant literacy progress. Public awareness has grown.

While the Tennessee team did not win its full funding request from the legislature, literacy programs have increased. Structural changes in the delivery and curricula of literacy programs have occurred as well. Linkages now exist between agencies and providers, creating a literacy continuum which guides adults through basic literacy attainment to functional literacy skill development, GED preparation, technical training, or job placement.

New alliances have been forged. The literacy effort now has a business support group comprised of 207 major businesses including Bell, Levi-Strauss, and GTE. GTE is sponsoring a matching program: for every 150 hours of employee time as a literacy volunteer, the company donates $1,000 to a literacy provider.

The team leader readily acknowledges that more needs to be done. Public awareness of the literacy issue must continue to grow until state funding for literacy matches the needs of Tennessee's citizens. Long-range planning for literacy enhancement must occur to stabilize an adequate funding base. The Executive Director of Adult Education already has ideas in mind. He is moving forward.

The State of Utah

The Academy team produced a blueprint for action, Utah ACCESS, which set policy direction and established a Governor's Task Force with three subcommittees. The subcommittees were to establish literacy policy for regular education programs, special target populations, and the workplace.

The work of these subcommittees influenced the development of three products:

- The No Read-No Graduate Committee Report presents 16 recommendations designed to strengthen reading programs at the local district level.
- Welfare-to-work legislation similar to California's GAIN program was proposed.

The proposed bill couples continued receipt of welfare benefits with literacy education, job training, and job placement.

- The Utah Adult Education Plan targets as a high priority for service adults with limited English language skills, adults from urban areas with high rates of unemployment, adults from rural areas, and immigrant and institutionalized adults.

Sometimes well-founded initiatives are overtaken by events.

This proved to be the case in Utah. A change in personnel in the Governor's office and the shift in leadership from the Department of Community and Economic Development to the Department of Education complicated implementation of Utah ACCESS. In winter-spring 1988, a rising tax-payers revolt became a major concern of both the legislature and the Governor and sounded the death knell of a major literacy initiative.

As of June 1988, the recommendations of the No Read-No Graduate Committee Report had not yet been forwarded to the State Board of Education for its approval. The draft GAIN legislation did not make it out of the legislative services office. For the near future at least, Utah ACCESS remains a good plan with some promising components, awaiting a more favorable political climate.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

The Virginia team developed a comprehensive and detailed literacy policy and action plan. The plan created a public and private structure for the development of literacy programs and funding. It established detailed mechanisms for coordinating this structure and ensuring future accountability of the literacy system. Implementation plans called for interagency, public/private regional literacy committees, the targeting of literacy funding to specific priority groups, and an extensive public awareness and marketing campaign.

The Virginia team avoided major pitfalls throughout the Academy project. Leadership from the highest levels of state government ensured that major state agencies and the Governor's office worked well together. The highly visible Literacy Initiative ensured ready and willing support from both the public and private sectors. Although under most circumstances "form *follows* function," the clearly defined organizational structure for literacy implementation (the VLF and SALC) facilitated clear policy development.

By July 1988, all twelve of the regional literacy coordinating committees were established and had met at least once. The coordinating committees serve as the local focal point for all literacy activities. Their first task will be the implementation of a regional/local literacy information and referral system.

The system will target as a priority ADC (welfare) recipients and teen mothers. Within six to nine months the regional committees will begin to develop regional literacy plans.

The State Office of Adult Literacy has met with all relevant state agencies regarding the development of a coordinated literacy information and referral system, which targets priority populations such as ADC recipients, teen mothers, and unemployed youth. The system will also include information and referral on necessary support services such as child care and transportation.

As of September 1, 1988, the Virginia literacy marketing campaign "hit the streets." Public service announcements (PSAs) were targeted to both regions and particular client populations.

Several literacy programs have been piloted with special target populations. JTPA is supporting three programs with $100,000 to serve ADC recipients and unemployed youth, ages 17-24. These projects will be replicated upon successful completion.

Most notably, for the 1988-1990 biennium, the state appropriated $4.25 million dollars for the enhancement of literacy services. This contrasts with a state general fund appropriation for the previous biennium of $40,000. As a result of the 1988-1990 state budget, the relationship of state to federal funds for local providers has changed dramatically – from almost 0 percent state/ 100 percent federal to 51 percent state/ 49 percent federal. This shift ensures that state literacy policy will become the driving force in the implementation of local literacy programs. The formula allocation of state funds to local ABE providers was adjusted to reflect the numbers of ADC recipients and unemployed youth, ages 16-24, in the provider service area. This sharply increased the amount of literacy funding that went to urban areas with large low-income populations. In addition, the state now requires local providers to identify and report on target groups served and outcomes achieved.

By December 1988, the Virginia Literacy Foundation achieved its goal of $3 million. These funds will provide support to volunteer literacy programs around the state.

Federal adult education funds will be used to provide technical assistance to local literacy providers in eight, primarily rural, regions where there is need. Technical assistance will stress improved management, curriculum design, and instruction.

In addition, VLF and state funds will jointly fund a training coordinator at the state's ABE Resource Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, who will provide training and technical assistance to private, volunteer literacy groups.

Virginia's implementation is on a fast track. The Governor has 12 months left in his term and constitutionally cannot be re-elected. The State Adult Literacy Committee and the Virginia Literacy Foundation are already planning to institutionalize this successful initiative. In the works are program and curricula design changes, using a new definition of literacy based on functional competencies. Once these changes are in place, the state will pilot performance-based contracts with literacy providers. The executive director of the State Office of Literacy envisions a statewide, performance-based system within three years.

THE ROLE OF LITERACY PARTNERS

As partnerships solidified in the state teams, patterns developed as to the roles each partner played in the development of the literacy initiative. For a detailed discussion of the roles played and contributions made, see state-specific sections which follow in Chapter Five.

The Governor/Governor's Office

Leadership: In five states the governor, the first lady, or a board or commission appointed by the governor provided leadership for the literacy initiative. In two states, senior policy analysts from the governor's office staffed the literacy effort. In two states, governors or their offices played only a minor role. High gubernatorial visibility raised public awareness and promoted the involvement of all stakeholders, including employers.

Authority: In Michigan, Virginia, and Massachusetts, governors chose to use their authority as chief executive officer to ensure interagency collaboration and institutional change. In several states in which the Governor did not have constitutional authority over the Department of Education, he established special commissions involving the education system. One commission established an Office of Literacy in the governor's office, thereby increasing his authority over this area. Another governor with weak constitutional authority over education used the planning process itself to ensure interagency collaboration. In Tennessee, Utah and Idaho, the governor chose not to use his authority as chief executive officer to ensure interagency collaboration. Instead he relied heavily on his appointed team leader to pull agency efforts together.

Resources: In Michigan and Virginia, the governors' designated literacy for employment as a high priority in the budget process. In both states, major efforts were launched to secure resources from the private sector as well as the public. In Massachusetts, the governor created and funded the Literacy Campaign to design a comprehensive package and develop support for it in the legislature. The temporary budget crisis in the state prevented him from strongly backing that package. The governor in Florida used the priority of literacy for employment as a condition for support of other budget actions, specifically funding of local ABE programs. North Carolina's and Missouri's governors used the budget process to reallocate resources within existing programs. Three governors encouraged use of existing resources to be targeted towards workforce literacy efforts.

Institutional Change: The governors of Michigan and Virginia were committed to institutional change in their literacy initiatives. Such change created new organizational structures, altered service delivery, and developed new data and accountability systems. These changes required considerable investment of time and energy for both public and private sector decision-makers and their staffs.

The JTPA/ Employment and Training System

Context: In all participating states the most critical contribution to the literacy effort was the employment context brought by JTPA representatives. Many literacy providers had never connected their services to employment outcomes. They neither understood the perspective of employers nor the range of functional skills needed by disadvantaged individuals looking for work or job advancement.

Without exception, JTPA representatives on state teams provided this perspective. Based on their experience with the accountable JTPA system – one that systematically reviewed training outcomes and cost per placement – they knew and could document the costs of low basic skills levels to employers, the employment and training system, and the job seekers themselves.

Leadership: In one state, Idaho, the JTPA representative became the team leader. He was responsible for connecting the issue of literacy to the governor's economic development agenda and for the eventual development of new workplace literacy programs in the state. In several other states, while the JTPA member was not the team leader, he or she provided the driving force for the development of workforce literacy policy objectives and programs.

Connections: The JTPA representative brought important connections to each state team – connections with Private Industry Councils and with employers. These connections proved invaluable to the states of Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Tennessee, and Virginia. These states incorporated significant employer/ private sector involvement in their literacy policies or action plans. For example, Virginia and Tennessee involved PICs in the development and operation of regional literacy councils.

Expertise and Information: JTPA members provided invaluable information and expertise to their teams in several areas: 1) the entry-level competencies needed by employers in the workforce; 2) the literacy/basic skills needs of the unemployed, particularly pregnant teens, high school dropouts, and welfare mothers; 3) accountability systems for literacy service providers, including appropriate outcomes, standards, and performance-based contracting; and 4) future demographic and economic trends in their states. In one state, the JTPA system helped to design, with others, a common accountability system for literacy, basic skills, and work competency training with common reporting requirements, expected outcomes, and standards.

Resources: In eight states, JTPA resources funded portions of the literacy action plans. Resources were used to support workplace literacy programs; dropout prevention programs; and basic skills training for dropouts,

welfare mothers, and dislocated workers. JTPA Title IIA 8 percent funds supported interagency collaboration between education, employment and training and social services agencies. JTPA Title IIA 6 percent incentive funds supported pilot programs combining literacy training with other services. Further, in several states the JTPA system supported the Department of Education's or the governor's budget request for enhanced literacy services.

Employers/ Private Sector

Three teams had a representative from the employer community who made major contributions to the team effort. The private sector heavily influenced the achievements of all teams in the Academy project in three ways.

Perspective: Like the JTPA system, the private sector offers a practical and outcome-oriented perspective to literacy initiatives. The employer community wants to know what is going to happen and what is going to change. Are entry level workers going to have basic skills that meet employers' needs? Are welfare recipients going to get and keep jobs? Can the existing workforce be retrained to solve more complex problems? Employers look for cost-effective solutions. As team members discovered, employers are willing to invest money in literacy training and in working with government, if they see a return on that investment and if accountability is assured. Finally, most employers are not interested in political and bureaucratic posturing. They are interested in collaborative, interagency action. If rhetoric continues for long without commitment and active follow-through, the employer community will often insist on a more effective process.

Leadership: While it is unusual for the private sector to assume leadership in an area of traditional government concern, this happened in two Academy states: Michigan and Missouri. In Michigan, several chief executive officers of major companies assumed leadership of literacy-related task forces. Another major company offered the governor assistance in the Academy planning effort. Their highly visible participation strengthened the overall literacy initiative, transforming it into major economic development policy.

The employer representative on the Missouri Academy team exercised strong, informal leadership. As an individual outside government, he helped the team move through barriers to effective collaboration. In between Academy meetings, he provided a strong focus on task and kept momentum going.

Resources: The private sector contributed significant resources to every state's literacy effort. Outstanding examples are Michigan and Virginia where the business community visibly supported initiatives with major funding and/or staff resources. But in every state private sector contribution made a significant difference. Employers contributed through participation on state and local advisory committees, literacy support groups, and PIC committees. Businesses worked collaboratively with state and local providers to design, offer, and fund workplace literacy programs. Businesses established in-house literacy programs for their employees and/or contributed employee time as volunteers in community literacy programs.

Adult Basic Education/Private Literacy Providers

Every Academy team had representation from ABE. On most teams private literacy providers were represented, usually through a coalition. These members were the backbone of the state team effort. Their involvement and commitment was essential. Implementation of team plans became problematic whenever literacy providers were not convinced. As members, they contributed in several major ways.

Knowledge and Experience: Without the knowledge and experience of literacy providers, policy development and planning could not go forward. On every team, literacy providers offered expertise on levels of literacy, expected standards of achievement, standard

practices, and innovative approaches. They provided insight into the literacy network, the state and private funding systems, and the motivations and expectations of teachers and volunteers. They shared information on how adults learn and the barriers to more effective learning. Private providers in particular understood how adults feel about their literacy skills or lack of skills and how they want to be treated by employers, state workers, and literacy providers.

Leadership: ABE directors exercised strong leadership on two teams: Florida and Tennessee. In many states, adult education has been treated as an underfunded backwater of the educational mainstream. As literacy became a major state and national policy concern, state adult education divisions were not automatically sought out for answers and leadership. In some teams, ABE directors expressed a healthy, initial skepticism. Would this rhetoric result in increased funding and more support? The Academy experience clearly demonstrated that some ABE directors wanted and were ready to assume leadership of literacy initiatives.

Commitment and Follow-through: In almost every team, public and private literacy providers became committed to plan implementation and systemic change. For some, this was not an easy process. It required rethinking literacy definitions, outcomes, standards, funding mechanisms, accountability measures, practices, and partnerships. Providers listened when it was hard, accepted criticism they did not feel they deserved, offered practical information they felt was ignored, and spoke out for the local perspective. They pushed through skepticism and traditional ways of thinking to offer innovative ideas. They collaborated with others and in many states became implementers of new approaches.

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

The experiences of the nine states involved in the CSPA State Policy Academy for Enhancing Literacy for Jobs and Productivity generated lessons that can help other states in making progress in this policy area. They are summarized below.

- A well-constructed policy team is critical to the success of a policy development effort. All major stakeholders must be represented, even if they are seen by some as barriers to progress. Teams with strong leadership from the governor's office were best able to implement the most comprehensive policies. The states with private sector involvement also produced strong policies and effective implementation. Teams need a good balance between politically knowledgeable and operationally knowledgeable members.

- State teams performing thorough environmental scans had more clearly defined problem statements and more cohesive teams. The process establishes openness and trust. Differences surface early before opinions become solidified. Prejudices can be discarded.

- A well-analyzed and documented problem statement is worth the effort. States with weak problem statements had difficulties maintaining momentum throughout the Academy process and during implementation.

- Teams that developed measurable, outcome-oriented policy objectives were more successful over time in implementing their policy than teams that did not. If a strategy or program is defeated in the political process, teams without policy objectives are back at the beginning of the process. Policy objectives guide implementation beyond short-term gains. They institutionalize success.

- Teams that developed alternative strategies were more successful in policy implementation than those that did not. Designing a policy with only one strategy leaves the entire initiative vulnerable to attack and defeat

if the strategy goes down in political flames or does not produce results as expected.

- State teams which sought critical review from outsiders (faculty and peers), tested their own assumptions, and estimated future impacts produced more effective policies.

- A fully developed action plan with several strategies, many operational objectives, and commitment of major stakeholders leads to effective implementation of a comprehensive, integrated initiative. Teams with less comprehensive plans exhibited one or more of these characteristics: lack of team leadership, imbalance in team membership between politically and technically knowledgeable members, team unwillingness to work on detail, and inability to listen to different perspectives.

- Effective action is possible even with an incomplete action plan. State actions fell into three broad categories: comprehensive, integrated approaches; special interagency projects or programs; and interagency groundwork for change. While not all states produced major changes in systems, almost all teams achieved program innovation and expansion. Every team applied new thinking, planning, and collaboration to enhancing literacy for jobs and productivity.

Chapter Five describes in detail each state's experience in the Academy project, the documents they produced, and the results they achieved. The **Florida** experience illustrates how separate constitutional authorities – the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, and the Legislature – forged a unified literacy policy. **Idaho's** efforts demonstrate that much can be accomplished even with resource constraints. The **Massachusetts** story emphasizes the importance of having a well-developed policy and plan to maintain implementation through unexpected difficulties. In **Michigan**, literacy moved from a strictly education issue to the top of the state's policy agenda as an economic development issue. The **Missouri** team process is a textbook example of interagency collaboration on policy development and implementation. **North Carolina's** participation in the Academy highlights how a governor's leadership can promote interagency collaboration even in areas where his constitutional authority is weak. **Tennessee's** experience exemplifies the tradeoffs states must confront in choosing short-term or long-term investment strategies in policy development and implementation. The **Utah** team process illustrates how one team coped with shifting priorities in the Governor's Office. **Virginia's** literacy initiative illustrates success in moving an issue from re-organization to policy development, implementation, and institutionalization.

Chapter 5: State Experience

THE STATE OF FLORIDA

The Groundwork

Florida's experience in the CSPA Academy represented the blending of the policy and political objectives of the state's major policymakers on the issue of adult literacy: the Governor (a Republican), the independently elected Commissioner of the Department of Education (a Democrat), and the Florida Legislature.

That all three policymakers considered the issue appropriate for their concern and action was apparent:

- In 1984 the legislature enacted the Adult Literacy Act, which states that Florida's goal was to reduce illiteracy in the state to 2 percent of the state's adult population by 1995.
- Governor Bob Martinez included $150,000 in his 1987-89 budget to form a Governor's Task Force on Adult Literacy. The charge to be given to the Task Force was to develop a statewide plan to address reduction of adult illiteracy in Florida.
- Further, the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services was initiating a new welfare reform program that would refer AFDC clients to literacy programs in local educational settings.
- In the 1987 session the legislature was debating a key literacy bill, the Florida Model Literacy Program Act, which required the Commissioner of Education to develop a statewide plan to fully implement the goal of the 1984 statute.

Clearly, state leadership had moved beyond the awareness level in the policy development cycle. The state's application presented the problem:

- Florida has an adult population (those 16 years and older) of over 9 million people. Approximately 2.7 million or 30 percent of these adults have completed 8 or fewer years of formal education. Additionally, the number of Florida's adults who have less than a high school education increased by 15 percent between 1970 and 1980. This increase exceeded the national trend.
- Florida is the fastest growing state in the nation.
- Florida has a large and diverse population of foreign-born immigrants. Many are illiterate in their native language as well as in English. In 1980, only slightly more than half of Florida's Hispanic population had completed high school.
- Given the existing trends in school dropout rates and foreign-born immigration of undereducated persons, a 30 percent increase in Florida's adult illiteracy rate is anticipated by the year 2000.

adult illiteracy is growing as rapidly as Florida's population.

The state knew it had a problem. The trends imposed significant barriers to the achievement of the goal set by the legislature in 1984. Florida's application identified five objectives for overcoming these barriers:

1. Strengthen linkages among state agencies;
2. Identify strategies to help adults achieve literacy;
3. Identify and adapt strategies to meet Florida's unique problems;
4. Develop a plan that will bond public agencies and private business/industry in their efforts to solve the state's illiteracy problem;
5. Create a coalition of leaders from the culturally diverse communities who will work towards eliminating illiteracy.

As the Florida team began the Academy project, they wondered how to integrate the policy and political objectives of the Governor, the Commissioner, and the Legislature. Who would lead the team?

Academy I: Struggles and Success

By the time the Florida team arrived at Academy I, co-chairs had been selected: the Senior Governmental Analyst in the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and the State Director of Adult Education of the Florida Department of Education. Significantly, the Legislative Analyst who was scheduled to attend the Academy did not come because the legislature was still in session.

During Academy I, debate within the team focused on several issues:

- The definition of literacy and appropriate outcomes of literacy services.

  Should literacy be defined by grade achievement level, grade performance level, or functional competency level? Some team members argued that grade achievement was commonly used and commonly understood. Others argued that functional competency levels were more relevant to the outcomes of employment and self-sufficiency. After all, they reasoned, literacy services are provided not for the sake of education but in order to reduce dependency. Others felt that an educational outcome, a high school diploma or a graduate equivalency degree, or even the next reading level, was a legitimate outcome by itself.

- The target population to receive literacy services.

  Should literacy services be provided to all on a first-come first-serve basis, similar to the current operation of the adult education system? Should literacy services be targeted to special populations with the goal of reducing dependency – populations such as public assistance recipients, unemployed adults, the incarcerated? The team members from the Departments of Labor (DOL) and Health and Rehabilitative Services (DHRS) argued in favor of targeted services: the state should spend its scarce resources where it would bring the greatest return on investment. Besides, DHRS was ready to implement Project Independence (a Welfare Reform Project) which referred AFDC clients to literacy programs in local educational settings. On the other hand, the DOE team member reasoned that adult education services should be available to all who needed them and wanted them; how could a local adult education provider set and enforce priorities?

- The ownership of the problem: state agencies, local education agencies, the private sector.

  While all team members agreed that literacy was a critical issue in Florida, they disagreed as to who should take prime responsibility for addressing the problems and im-

plementing the solutions. The DOE team member felt that it was his agency's responsibility. The agency wished to proceed with its own solutions at its own pace. DHRS had a strong stake in targeting and moving quickly – they were in the implementation phase of Project Independence. The DOL member felt unclear about his agency's role; when strategies related to employment outcomes, his involvement and commitment increased. The co-chair from the Governor's Office wanted joint ownership but felt constrained by political differences between the Governor and the Commissioner.

- Accountability in the provision of literacy services.

  Some team members felt strongly that accountability should be improved in the education system and that a literacy initiative that was geared towards employment outcomes would provide a good opportunity. Others argued that it was difficult to build an accurate and reliable way of holding education providers accountable for student outcomes.

As the team struggled to resolve differences of opinion and agree on a jointly developed policy document, the legislature was taking action: it passed the Florida Model Literacy Program Act of 1987 and did not fund the Governor's Task Force on Adult Literacy. The team had word of the legislative action on day three of the Academy. However, the legislative action did not resolve the debate for the team; it pushed ahead to develop a solid policy proposal to present to the Governor and the Commissioners of DHRS, DOE, and DOL.

The policy document established four target groups as highest priority for literacy services: public assistance recipients, the unemployed, the incarcerated, and individuals at less than 4th grade achievement level. Two policy objectives were restated from the Florida literacy statute passed in 1984; three objectives related to the target populations. They were outcome oriented in that they proposed moving individuals along a literacy continuum from one competency to another, but they did not set numbers or specify the competency levels. An excellent list of possible strategies to achieve the objectives ended the document. The strategies ranged from very broad to very specific:

- Develop and implement a program which places accountability on the part of the provider of services and rewards those who actually deliver the services;

- Establish a system of support services, such as counseling, day care, and transportation for public assistance recipients during the transition to unsubsidized employment;

- Obtain baseline data which include the number and percentages of adults 16 years and older with educational skills levels 0-4 and 5-8 respectively, on a district by district basis to include a subset of AFDC recipients and those incarcerated.

The team members at Academy I reflected the history of distrust and frustration between their agencies. They struggled to understand each agency's organizational imperatives, incentive systems, and modes of operation. They forged a compromise document which appeared to meet all agency needs and live within the constraints of legislative mandates. The private sector representative on the team was instrumental in moving the team through conflicts and in producing a joint document.

Would this document be acceptable to senior policymakers back home? How would the compromise be affected by the 1987 legislative action? Would the balance of power on the team be affected? Would the co-chair arrangement be effective in accomplishing team business in the interim?

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

As work in Florida proceeded on the initiative, several questions had to be resolved:

- How would the team be convened and work proceed given that the team had co-chairs? This question was complicated by difficult relations between the Governor and the Commissioner.
- How would the work of the team be meshed with the 1987 Florida Model Literacy Program Act, which mandated that the state Department of Education develop a comprehensive literacy plan?

The Florida team encountered the following pitfalls:

- The team was unable to move forward immediately upon return from the Academy. The first full team meeting was not held until two months later. The co-chairs had difficulty reaching each other by phone. It was clear the Governor and the Commissioner did not want the other to proceed alone; it was not clear how they wanted to work together.
- In the absence of a team meeting, the DOE decided to contract with the state university system to assist it in writing the Comprehensive Literacy Plan.
- The DOL team member turned his attention to operational concerns of his agency and waited for the co-chairs to take leadership. During the interim, he was able to attend only a few team meetings.
- The DHRS team member focused his attention on implementation of Project Independence.

By the end of July the co-chairs had communicated, and the team began to make progress:

- The top policymakers in all agencies reviewed the policy document produced at Academy I. In general, it received positive response.
- The team requested CSPA staff to facilitate all team meetings during the interim. They felt this facilitation would help them deal with the difficulties of having co-chairs.
- In early August at an expanded team meeting (which included the contractors to write the Comprehensive Literacy Plan), the team decided to blend the work of the Academy team with DOE's development of the comprehensive plan.
- Team membership expanded to include a representative from Corrections.
- In combining the work of the team with the development of the Comprehensive Plan, two critical changes were made in the team's original document:
  - The target groups were expanded to include a category "other." This group included: 1) those employed, functioning at a grade level equivalent of 4th-8th grade, who cannot progress in jobs because of their lack of basic skills; 2) parents of children "at risk" of not succeeding educationally; and 3) the avocational learner, possibly the elderly.
  - The arena of primary responsibility shifted from state agencies to local educational agencies. The plan called for Local Education Authorities (LEAs), which operate adult education programs, to submit local literacy plans for approval to the state. Within certain state guidelines, LEAs would choose the target groups they were to serve in priority order.
- Because of a legislatively mandated due date of late fall for the plan and the requirement for public comment, the team and DOE moved on a fast track. Unfortunately, this fast track did not allow time for additional data collection to document functional literacy levels of key target groups to

enable specific, outcome-oriented policy objectives.

The team was favorably positioned for Academy II. A draft plan would be completed and out for public hearing immediately prior to the second Academy meeting. The final plan would go to the State Board of Education (the Governor and the Commissioner both sit on the Board) for approval in January.

Academy II: Results and Rewards

When the team reassembled at Academy II two members were missing: the representatives from DOL and the Florida Literacy Coalition. The Legislative Analyst was able to attend part of the Academy. Several team members were called away from the Academy at various times.

Most of the team's time at the Academy was spent refining and editing the final draft of the Florida Adult Literacy Plan. The team was exhausted from several months of hard work developing the document.

The plan brought to Academy II was reviewed by faculty and other states. Several reviewers felt the policy objectives drawn from the Florida Statute were very broad. Although they specified two different literacy levels, they did not identify target groups within each level nor did they specify particular outcomes on the literacy continuum.

- By 1995, Florida will reduce the percentage of the adult population lacking basic literacy skills, defined as below 4th grade level (0 through 3.9) from the current level of 3.5 percent to 2 percent.

- By 1995, Florida will reduce the percentage of the adult population lacking functional literacy skills, defined as below 9th grade level (4.0 through 8.9) from the current level of 18 percent to 10 percent.

While setting certain guidelines for the LEAs in the development of their local literacy plans, the plan did not include any accountability measures to judge or insure compliance.

The plan did not offer specific strategies for how state and local agencies could work with employers in the development of literacy programs.

Finally, the leadership role of state agencies was weak in the plan. While strategies for state agencies were identified, responsible agencies were often not identified and no dates were assigned for completion of particular strategies.

Throughout Academy II, the team worked on the plan, addressing this critique. Changes included the addition of the following sections:

- A section to the problem statement in the plan which described "special populations:"

  > ...these dependent populations should be of critical concern in efforts to address the literacy needs with the 0-4, 5-8 priority funding groups identified in law.

  The section described in detail the rationale for serving government-assisted clients, adult offenders incarcerated in state penal institutions, and the unemployed.

- A section to "Introduction to the Strategies for Achieving Adult Literacy" listed indicators of compliance for six of the seven mandatory components of the local literacy plans.

While the state plan did not say what would happen to a LEA if its plan did not contain these indicators of compliance, their inclusion in the plan greatly strengthened its specificity and enhanced the potential for accountability. For example:

- *Component 2*: Interagency and intra-agency cooperation and coordination through meaningful local working agreements.

Compliance Indicators: For those segments of the illiterate population composed of recipients of government assistance, incarcerated persons, and unemployed persons, the signing of specific agreements may be required. The agreements may delineate testing, referral procedures, communication procedures, the number of clients to receive specific services, the number of hours of services to be provided, the degree to which resources will be shared, the nature and value of these resources, and results in terms of average participants progress for such coordination...."

- *Component 5*: Program evaluation criteria and procedures.

  Compliance Indicators: ...Evaluation will take place in two domains: a) delivery and compliance, and b) impact and consequences...future data requirements will include:

  - The average grade level progress and other significant indicator of progress of each student in a special or general adult population group by grades 0-4 and 5-8...;
  - Entry-level competency of each student or a special or general-population groups by grades 0-4 and 5-8...;
  - Numbers and kinds of learners entering further educational opportunities, such as vocational programs;
  - Numbers and kinds of learners completing subsequent educational opportunities...;
  - Numbers and kinds of learners getting, keeping and/or attaining advancement in jobs; and
  - Numbers and kinds of learners who become economically and socially self-sufficient and self-reliant (as indicated by such criteria as...)

The plan further suggested that a cost per contact hour should be established which "can assist in making management decisions regarding future funding requirements and the cost-efficiency of current expenditures."

The Florida Adult Literacy Plan represented a success for the Florida Team. Despite the differing approaches of the agencies involved and despite competing political objectives, the team produced a plan which met three out of five of its original objectives. Though a compromise, the plan contained at least in part, the major requirements of team members and the agencies they represented.

On January 26, 1988, the Florida State Board of Education approved the Florida Adult Literacy Plan. Both the Governor and the Commissioner of Education, along with the Secretaries of DHRS, DOL and Corrections, signed the cover letter on the Plan, which went out to the Local Education Agencies requiring them to develop local literacy plans in order to receive literacy funding from the state.

Implementation: Woes and Winners

As of June 1988, the State Department of Education had established guidelines for local literacy plan development and evaluation criteria for state review of local plans. The Department conducted regional training workshops, inviting participation of local representatives from the Departments of Health and Rehabilitative Services and Labor, LEAs, Private Industry Councils, and literacy volunteers. All agencies were encouraged to plan jointly at the local level.

Final Results

The final results of the Florida initiative will not be known for another 12-24 months. Progress has been made: senior-level collaboration among the Governor and the Commissioner

and the legislature has occurred; the state departments of Education, HRS, and Labor are all involved in monitoring the implementation of the Florida state plan and in reviewing local literacy plans. Literacy as a policy issue has moved beyond the strict purview of the Department of Education and has been tied to dependency reduction and economic development. Most importantly, local school districts must now plan for enhancement of literacy services to target populations. This planning must involve interagency communication and collaboration. State government has demonstrated to local agencies that teamwork can succeed.

THE STATE OF IDAHO

The Groundwork

Throughout the Academy project the Idaho team struggled to answer two key questions:

- What is an appropriate commitment of time and money at the state level to address the literacy needs of Idahoans – especially since the level of public awareness of the problem is low and Idaho statistics indicate a problem which is not severe compared to many states?
- What is the appropriate involvement of the Governor on this issue – especially since he is starting his first term and the state is economically depressed? How should he frame the issue to mesh with his overall priority of economic development for Idaho?

Governor Andrus, in his cover letter to Idaho's application stated:

> As Governor of the State of Idaho, I am dedicated to a revitalization of Idaho's economy. An integral part of economic growth is a well-educated workforce to meet the demands of an everchanging and extremely competitive marketplace.

The state Department of Education estimated that approximately 200,000 Idahoans are in need of adult basic education. In addition, approximately 6-8 percent of the total population is Hispanic, mostly agricultural workers with an 8th grade education or less.

As Academy I approached, the Governor's Office was undecided on the level of state commitment. Funding for out-of-state travel was scarce. The Governor was just establishing his policy office, and staff were spread thin. Shortly before Academy I, the Governor's Office decided not to send staff to the meeting. The team of three would be headed by the State Coordinator of Adult Basic Education.

Academy I: Struggles and Success

The Idaho team worked hard to define the problem:

> ...Approximately 36,000 adults are functioning below the fourth grade level. Another 120,000 adults function below the twelfth grade level. Potentially 40 percent of the adult population may have difficulties in one or more of the basic skills. Statistics indicate that within Idaho's dislocated worker population and economically disad-

vantaged population (estimated to be 12 percent of the entire adult population) more than 50 percent of this group does not have a high school diploma and is in need of basic skills training.

Compounding this problem is the fact that Idaho's investment in public schooling is at the low end of the scale nationwide. Its investment in Adult Basic Education is approximately $8 per adult served. In addition, its geographical barriers and rural nature impose significant service delivery problems.

The team set a clear policy goal:

Idaho is committed to helping its citizens lead productive and independent lives. The combined state and local resources of Idaho must be applied to re-train approximately 25 percent of the labor force or approximately 100,000 people to move to higher levels of basic skills required by a changing job market.

Finally, the team agreed on two policy objectives. One targeted current workers through an increase in workplace literacy programs – 25,000 workers served by 1993 and 60,000 by 1998. The second called for enrollment increases of general adult learners in existing literacy/basic skills programs by 10 percent annually for 10 years.

To accomplish their objectives, the team listed strategies that included a public awareness campaign for business and industry employers and employees; development of coalitions of literacy service providers and representatives of business and industry; a Governor's Advisory Committee on Literacy; and expanded resources for basic literacy services in ABE, JTPA, and GED programs.

The Idaho plan had weaknesses. The numbers were soft; the target populations were not clearly defined; the plan did not specify outcomes on a functional literacy continuum. However, by clearly connecting literacy to economic development – the Governor's priority – the document established overall policy direction for a literacy initiative.

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

The Idaho team made rapid progress upon return from Academy I:

- The team briefed the Governor's staff on what was learned at the Academy. The team continued to meet monthly to develop a general strategy for the literacy effort.
- The Governor's Office and the team decided that raising public awareness of the problem was a priority strategy.

To accomplish this strategy, the Governor's Office and the team initiated several actions:

- Academy team members and others in the Governor's Academy work group made presentations to a wide variety of groups, always stressing literacy as an economic development issue.
- The Department of Employment coordinated Idaho's involvement in the IBM national teleconference on literacy held in late June: The American Seminar II: Literacy, Your Community, and its Workforce. The teleconference, the largest video conference ever held in the state, was conducted at four sites involving several hundred individuals. As part of the teleconference broadcast, Governor Andrus appeared on videotape discussing the problem of adult literacy and its impact on economic development and growth in the state.
- The Governor's Office planned to form a Literacy Coalition to influence public awareness and to conduct an assessment of agency services as part of the anticipated coordination of adult literacy services.

- The state planned to request technical assistance from CSPA once the Literacy Coalition was established. The state hoped to spearhead this effort with a presentation by a chief executive officer from the private sector who would urge business community involvement in solving the problem.

The state also encountered some pitfalls in the interim. The Governor had to choose his priorities carefully. Literacy, as a priority, had to compete with the depressed situation of the Idaho economy. Also, it was not clear to the team who was taking the lead on the literacy effort: the Governor or the Department of Education. Until this decision was made by the Governor's Office, concerted state action was slow.

By mid-fall a decision was made to incorporate the literacy initiative into an economic development framework:

- Governor Andrus appointed a nine-person blue ribbon Idaho Workforce 2000 Task Force. The group was charged by the Governor to consider the workforce literacy issue and to provide recommendations on how to coordinate and expand literacy efforts.

- Via a JTPA grant to the University of Idaho, a comprehensive, statewide survey of adult education, schools, and human resource program providers was conducted assessing literacy needs and services.

- The Governor's economic development action plan, released in November, contained the following recommendation:

  Strengthen adult education so that 95 percent of Idaho's residents will be literate and readily employable within five to ten years.

The team was well positioned for Academy II: The issue was clearly framed; public awareness and commitment had risen; the Governor's Office had determined its level of commitment; the Workforce 2000 Task Force had received the Governor's charge.

However, no member of the original Academy team had been appointed to the Task Force. While the Task Force was being staffed by the Department of Employment, it was not clear how the Department of Education would relate to that effort. The results of the survey had not been analyzed and were not available to the team. While a Workforce 2000 Task Force member was asked to attend Academy II, the Governor's Office and other senior-level decision makers did not attend.

How could the team capitalize on the positive developments of the interim period and connect directly with the Governor's economic development initiative? Who would lead the team?

Academy II: Results and Rewards

After some initial indecision, the team selected the representative from the Idaho Department of Employment as team leader. The team strengthened the economic development framework of its policy document. The plan's two policy objectives remained the same. The first established numbers to be served through workplace literacy programs: 25,000 workers by 1993 and 60,000 by 1998.

The second objective set percentage increase targets for enrollment in Adult Basic Education, volunteer programs, postsecondary remedial programs, and literacy-related job training programs.

Target groups were now specified: at risk youth ages 15-21; dislocated workers without a high school diploma or GED or a functional literacy level below a high school diploma/GED; clients of social service agencies who have a functional literacy level below high school diploma/GED, such as AFDC recipients, clients of the Salvation Army, and the Idaho Migrant Council; and employed workers lacking basic skills to adapt to changing technologies in the workplace. The team did not feel comfortable setting priorities among these target groups.

The team developed several operational objectives and activities:

- By December 1988, five workplace literacy programs will be installed in business locations. Specific industries that would be targeted included food processing, small wood products manufacturing, and retail sales. Responsible agency: State Board of Education.

- By October 1988, design and implement a basic skills awareness campaign for business and industry employers. Responsible agency: Academy team.

- By July 1989, 90 percent of all persons who have positive terminations from dislocated worker programs will have a GED or equivalent basic skills level. Responsible agencies: Departments of Employment and Education.

- Continue the Academy team's availability as an advocate for and provider of technical assistance to local literacy coalition efforts. Three identifiable provider coalitions will be in place by January 1989. Responsible agency: Academy team.

The plan included several objectives on training providers of literacy services and community-based social services as well as state agency staff from the Departments of Employment, Health and Welfare, and Vocational Education.

Finally, the plan outlined specific activities that would connect the work of the Academy team to the Governor's Workforce 2000 Taskforce. The activities included:

- Brief the Taskforce on the work of the team and the results of the adult literacy survey;

- Recommend the Taskforce study and review funding policies of agencies which mandate or encourage literacy services; new program designs with a literacy component; coordination of literacy services; and the literacy needs of at-risk youth.

- Recommend policies and programs on the literacy needs of at-risk youth to be incorporated in the Taskforce's plan, due November 1988.

Though the Idaho final document lacked outcome and accountability measures, the team was proud of its accomplishments. While the team had been hampered by lack of top-level participation at Academy meetings, it had good reason to claim success:

- The team moved the literacy initiative from a policy backwater into the policy mainstream by firmly connecting it to the Governor's economic development agenda.

- The Governor's Office and the team made the most of scarce state resources by carefully choosing priorities for action and following through in a cost-effective way: teleconference; local technical assistance; JTPA-funded literacy survey; Workforce 2000 Taskforce.

- Leadership for the literacy initiative was firmly established in the Department of Employment.

The state of Idaho had successfully answered the unresolved questions at the beginning of the Academy project. But would the connection between literacy and jobs, employment and economic development hold up under the pressures of implementation?

Implementation: Woes and Winners

The Academy team's strategy for plan implementation succeeded. Following Academy II, the Workforce 2000 Task Force member on the team was named chairman of the Task Force's Committee on workforce literacy. The committee met monthly and travelled throughout the state, meeting with employers, educators and community leaders on the sub-

ject of workforce literacy. This activity has constituted a public relations/ awareness campaign across the state.

The Academy team members attended the meetings of the Workforce Literacy Committee. They offered the results of their research and policy development work as well as the information and materials made available to them through the CSPA Academy. The committee's report, finalized in November 1988, accepted several of the Academy team's recommendations for action.

An interagency group, representing the Academy team, Vocational Education, Employment, Education and the Idaho Private Industry Council (PIC) Association, recently met to develop strategies for installing workplace literacy programs. A collaborative effort is being designed, and the search is on for funding to implement the program.

The Department of Employment is identifying practical ways in which employment office line staff who deal with the public can identify money clients in need of basic skills training and encourage them to seek assistance. Typical of Idaho's practical and cost-conscious approach, the department is accomplishing this through the use of a VISTA literacy volunteer at the Boise local office of the Department of Employment. Identified methods will be used statewide.

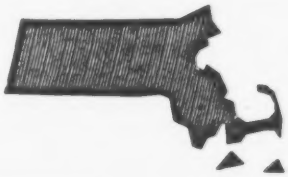
Final Results

Although the Academy team had not accomplished implementation of all the objectives outlined in its Academy II plan as of June 1988, it had made significant progress. Regional coalitions had not yet been developed; agency budgets had not yet been affected. However, public awareness had clearly risen, the Governor's commitment through the Task Force was secure, and the groundwork for new workplace literacy programs had been laid.

Team member, Jim Adams, from the Idaho Department of Employment, summarizes the situation:

> The CSPA Academy team has meshed nicely with the broader efforts of the Work Force 2000 Task Force, as well as contributed to other efforts. The tie between workplace literacy and the state's capacity for economic development has been one of the foundations for the Task Force Committee. Because of the Academy, the state's effort to enhance adult literacy is definitely on the front burner.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS



The Groundwork

Massachusetts was well positioned to benefit from the Academy project. Its experience in the Academy illustrates how a well-designed policy can survive and achieve outcomes in the face of unexpected crisis. Governor Dukakis named adult literacy as one of his top priorities; he committed resources to three new literacy-related programs; and he established the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign, funded it, and appointed a director. Also, an interagency adult literacy policy group had recently been established. Finally, the Massachusetts Coalition for

Adult Literacy had just received a grant from the Gannett Foundation.

The state was ready to go. With the Governor's commitment, many activities already underway, and the potential for major funding, the team seemed to be positioned for success. However, political currents in the state were strong; close scrutiny of any initiative undertaken by Governor Dukakis was certain.

The team clearly outlined its objectives for the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign:

- Develop a statewide plan, which combines and coordinates the efforts of all state and local agencies and private enterprises.
- Develop long-range plans for each of the Governor's major literacy initiatives: workplace education; development of a volunteer network; applications of technology to increasing literacy.
- Develop a plan for establishing a sound and stable financial base for adult literacy programs, using federal and state resources supplemented by other public and private resources, without creating new and expensive frameworks.
- Develop a strategy for establishing and maintaining state legislative support for literacy endeavors.
- Develop a marketing strategy with broad reach for recruiting students, volunteers, and resources, and furthering general public awareness.

The team leader, director of the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign, was new to the field of literacy but not to education. As Senate chair of the joint House and Senate Education Committee, he had shepherded through the Senate major education reform legislation. He was committed to participation in the CSPA Academy process.

Academy I: Struggles and Success

Partly due to ground-breaking work on welfare reform and its connection to employment and training, Massachusetts policymakers had already joined adult literacy enhancement to the outcomes of employment and preventing and reducing dependency. The overall policy direction for the initiative was firmly established. But the team had to confront two major questions:

- In a state known for strong special interests and agency turf, how would the team build an effective interagency initiative?
- How could the team build a framework for expanded literacy services without creating a new and expensive system?

Early team discussions at Academy I were frank and open, as team members argued for their constituencies and negotiated for a piece of the literacy pie. The entire team was receptive to new information presented at the Academy on the functional definition of literacy, the literacy continuum, and the targeting of special groups to achieve specified outcomes on the literacy continuum. Instead of discussing which agencies did what to whom, the team attempted to build consensus on critical target groups in need of literacy skills and appropriate outcomes on the literacy continuum for each group.

This effort enabled to the team to sharpen its focus while building consensus. By the end of Academy I, it had a specific policy goal and objectives:

- By the year 1990, to enable 50,000 adults to develop the basic skills necessary to participate more fully in our political community and to contribute to the continued productivity of our economy.
- Increase the basic skills of 15,000 limited English speaking adults leading to further education, training, or job placement.

- move 9,000 from pre-literacy to some English (0-4th grade ability) on the literacy continuum;
- move 6,000 from 4th grade functional level to 8th grade functional level.

- Increase the basic skills of 5,000 welfare recipients leading to participation in the Commonwealth's employment and training program.
  - target those at 0-4th grade ability as a priority;
  - move them up to 7th grade ability on the literacy continuum.
- Increase the basic skills of 10,000 mothers of pre-school children, women whose reading skills are below 8th grade ability.
  - move from 0 to 12th grade ability on the literacy continuum;
  - focus outcome on enhancing school readiness of children.
- Increase the basic skills of 10,000 16-25 year-old males who are out of school and work, leading to continued education, training, and employment.
  - move from 4th grade ability level through high school functional level on the literacy continuum.
- Enhance the basic skills of 5,000 dislocated workers to enable them to secure jobs at comparable wages.
  - move from 3rd grade functional level to postsecondary functional level on literacy continuum.
- Assist in the training, retraining, and upgrading of 2,500 potentially dislocated workers (high risk) to enable them to retain jobs, advance in their firms, or secure other comparable employment elsewhere.
  - move from 3rd grade functional level to postsecondary functional level on literacy continuum.
- Assist in the education, training, and retraining of 2,500 working poor to increase their wage by 25 percent.
  - target those at 2nd - 7th grade functional level on the literacy continuum as a priority;
  - move them up to 10th grade functional level.

The early identification of target groups at Academy I freed the team to discuss a variety of strategies to achieve the policy objectives. Major strategies included:

- To provide comprehensive ESL in the natural communities of each linguistic minority, in concert with existing social, cultural, and religious organizations.
- To develop in concert with the Department of Public Welfare a comprehensive pre-Employment and Training (ET) Choices program that will expand the range of services currently available to welfare recipients, targeting resources to skills acquisition levels of 0-7th grade.
- To develop in concert with Headstart, Chapter 188 (MA Education Reform Act), Early Childhood, and other child care programs, skills enhancement programs for mothers of enrolled children.
- To provide a mix of services – including literacy skills, training, and supported work with wages competitive with "the street" – that will motivate youth to participate in basic skills enhancement programs.
- To challenge the business and labor communities to participate in the above initiative by adopting a critical mass of these youth for employment or membership.
- To develop a corps of volunteers from within the business and labor communities to serve as mentors to support participating youth.

- To develop a public awareness campaign aimed at convincing employers, unions, and workers of the needs for skills enhancement in order to enable them to retain current workforce/employment or promote/advance.

- To expand the current Workplace Education Initiative from 1,000 to 2,500 participants.

The team also agreed that all strategies would:

- Include provisions for motivation, recruitment, and support of targeted populations;

- Include program evaluation and accountability mechanisms including performance-based contracting;

- Maximize use of existing resources in conjunction with accessing new state and federal resources;

- Include the use of volunteers to enhance literacy services.

Academy participants were impressed with the team's focus and scope but, grumbled one participant, "In Massachusetts, you have money for everything."

"We'll see – we'll see," responded the team leader. This was in fact the question that faced the team when they returned home:

> Exactly how much will it cost to move 50,000 individuals to a specific point on a literacy continuum by 1990?

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

The team divided its interim work into three categories:

1. Conducting further research and documentation to back up the plan – specifically, analysis on the Massachusetts workforce in the year 2000, demographic and statistical information on each of the target groups along with estimates of current literacy levels, and audit of current service levels to the target groups by source of funding and provider group.
2. Strengthening political coalitions that included provider agencies and organizations, advocacy groups, state agencies, and the legislature.
3. Developing a private sector strategy that would involve business leaders more directly in building and supporting the initiative.

These three activities were guided by one overall purpose:

> Build an effective funding strategy to support the ambitious goal of the plan.

After further research, the team concluded that $7 million was needed to launch the first year of the workforce literacy initiative. By September 1987, the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign had completed the final draft of the Massachusetts Workforce Literacy Plan and scheduled a series of meetings with key stakeholders to gather their reactions. The plan was adjusted to reflect stakeholders' comments.

The Governor called for public/private partnerships and challenged labor and business to work with him to enhance workforce literacy. He was publicly supported by the secretary-treasurer of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO and chief executive officers of major corporations.

Throughout the interim, the team worked with the Governor's Office to build support for their $7 million request. However, by December 1988, the team learned that the Governor's budget would have only a few expansion items. Ultimately, the Governor's budget did include about $1 million dollars for expansion of workplace literacy programs to serve three of the targeted populations: those with limited

English proficiency, the working poor, and potentially dislocated workers.

Pitfalls the team encountered included:

- Supportive but cautious reception from the business community. The business community was generally supportive of the initiative, but Boston business leaders had already committed their available time to the Boston Compact Initiative, a school/business partnership focused on dropout prevention for at-risk youth. Employers in the Boston business community did not yet understand how investing in *adult* literacy would help them.

  The Campaign decided to further develop the plan, raise public awareness and visibility, and go back to business leaders at a later date.

- Getting solid interagency collaboration from the 15 state agencies involved in literacy, adult education, basic skills training, and employment and training proved to be time-consuming and difficult.

In spite of the budget set-back, the team approached Academy II with enthusiasm, planning to work on 1) improving political communication skills; 2) building more effective interagency collaboration; and 3) designing a strong accountability component for the policy document.

Academy: Results and Rewards

The team arrived at Academy II with a fully developed policy document and plan. The introduction to the document argued persuasively for a major expansion in the adult literacy system:

> Recognizing that the changing occupational structure of the Massachusetts job market is increasing the demand for workers with stronger literacy, communication and problem-solving skills and that the current adult literacy network does not have sufficient capacity to address these needs, this plan proposes a three-year expansion of the adult literacy system from a current service capacity of 45,000 adults per year to an increased capacity of 100,000 adults per year.

The plan targeted the expansion to:

- 15,000 new seats for newcomers who need English language and literacy skills to function effectively at home and in the workplace;
- 5,000 new seats in intensive, community-based basic literacy (0-4th grade level) programs for AFDC recipients who need a foundation of basic skills to qualify for entry-level job training and employment;
- 10,000 new seats for mothers of young children who need stronger basic skills to move their families out of poverty and to raise the educational aspirations of their children. Teen mothers will receive priority;
- 7,500 new seats for young men, aged 16-24, who have dropped out of school without sufficient skills to qualify for employment;
- 5,000 new seats for low-wage workers who need literacy and English language skills to qualify for more skilled, higher-wage employment opportunities;
- 5,000 new seats for potentially dislocated workers who need stronger literacy and basic skills to adapt to the introduction of new technology and other changes in the organization of work;
- 3,000 seats for dislocated workers who need stronger literacy and basic skills to qualify for retraining and re-employment at comparable wages.

The plan directly confronted the issue of cost:

> We assume...an average cost per student per year of $1,000 - $1,500. This is substantially higher than the current Department of Education average expenditure per student of $168 per year. Since 80 percent of all adults (served) are currently served in DOE-funded programs, this exceedingly low average expenditure per student has impoverished the adult basic education network. The current infrastructure lacks sufficient classroom facilities, teaching materials, and full-time professionals staff to support the kind of expansion detailed here. A higher average cost per student will support:
>
> - the high-intensity, longer duration, low-level services necessary to provide a foundation for more advanced education and training for several of these groups;
> - the development of a full continuum of services that can take an adult from the lowest level of literacy or English language proficiency through high school completion and advanced education and training;
> - the development of a corps of well-trained, full-time adult literacy and ESL professionals qualified to provide high quality, effective services;
> - the development of a strong documentation and evaluation capacity that will enable the state to determine what methods of instruction and what means of service delivery are most effective in preparing adults to qualify for employment and training.

Finally, the plan included a matrix that identified major state agency responsibility for literacy and support services by target group.

At Academy II, in addition to fine-tuning the plan based on critique from faculty and peers, the team developed a political communications strategy and a matrix detailing planned outcomes by target group. Finally, the team developed "Characteristics of Effective Programs to Achieve Planned Outcomes for Target Groups." This document was intended to form the basis of standards for the design of new programs.

The following example relates to the target group of young urban males, ages 16-24, who have dropped out of school without sufficient skills:

- Programs are located in public housing and other appropriate settings;
- Program models combine education with employment (e.g. supported work, "apprenticeship") to provide work experience and financial incentive for participation;
- Staff includes street workers;
- Program includes strong mentor component;
- Curriculum focuses on daily life/work problem-solving.

The challenge for the Massachusetts team was to continue building support for an adult literacy expansion plan that necessitated the involvement of a number of constituency groups and agencies. Would the team be able to muster the political support required to gain the appropriation it was requesting?

Implementation: Woes and Winners

Following Academy II, the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign (CLC) conducted meetings with the Governor's staff, cabinet officials, the advocacy/provider community, the state AFL-

CIO Education Committee, and business leaders. The objectives were:

- To introduce their *Workforce 2000* analysis and build a strong case for a coordinated expansion of state literacy services targeted at key groups that comprise the labor force.
- To build commitment among these groups to use the analysis, to lobby for expansion, and to gain a commitment from each agency/organization to work for the *whole plan*, not just one piece.

The Secretaries of Economic Affairs and Labor, the Commissioners of Education, the Chancellor of Higher Education, the Massachusetts Coalition of Adult Literacy (MCAL), and the AFL-CIO all publicly supported the Workforce Literacy Plan.

The plan was featured in many news articles in the state's major newspapers and in many local papers. At the Democratic State Convention the campaign organized and staffed a Literacy Breakfast and Awareness Day.

The Campaign continued to develop interagency coordination. They expanded the team to include representation from the Board of Regents, the Library Commissioners, and "Gateway Cities." The Department of Education agreed to sponsor five regional meetings on the Plan and to initiate three task forces on program effectiveness, staff development, and funding. The CLC and Commonwealth Futures (a policy group working on youth employment issues) planned a joint initiative on urban males, ages 16-24. Agency stakeholders liked the Plan's organization around target groups. The Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants began to coordinate policy/planning around these target groups.

Agencies are working with the Campaign to meet the Plan's December deadlines for:

- A coordinated RFP process;
- Uniform data collection;
- Uniform standards for program effectiveness and client outcomes; and
- Comprehensive regional planning on literacy.

The Campaign was successful in gaining a lot of support for its literacy appropriation request. MCAL offered its support based on the workforce plan. Key legislators (10 of 40 Senators and 55 of 160 Representatives) sponsored a Legislative Briefing on Adult Literacy addressed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader.

As of July 1988, the Campaign had not received their requested appropriation. The Campaign's legislation (requesting a budget of $8 million) had a favorable report out of the Joint Education Committee and out of Ways and Means, even though no appropriations were attached. Due to unexpected revenue shortfalls and a possible budget deficit, all expansion requests, including the $1 million in the Governor's budget, were put on hold.

Final Results

Sometimes the finest policy development efforts do not come to immediate fruition. The Massachusetts team had to cope with a volatile political environment due to presidential campaign politics and an unexpected budget situation. In spite of the difficulties encountered, the team developed a tight policy and plan. The plan remained the Commonwealth Campaign's guidance system, keeping the team on target. They continue to accomplish elements of the plan which do not require major new appropriations. In six or seven months, when the budget and the political environment change, the Campaign will try again with a proven track record and increased support.

THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

The Groundwork

Michigan's Academy experience illustrates how literacy moved to the top of the state's policy agenda. Literacy had been defined as a strictly education issue. As a result of the Academy, it became a workforce issue affecting the state's future economic development.

Literacy had been a policy concern in Michigan since 1984:

The 1980 census data indicated that 13 percent-15 percent of Michigan's population 20 years of age or older – a minimum of 797,000 adults – had less than a ninth grade education. In addition, approximately 1.3 million adults did not have a high school diploma. This number had since risen to 1.7 million...an average of 30,000 students officially drop out of the K-12 educational system annually. Further, thousands of immigrants and refugees who have arrived in the state are illiterate in English as well as their own language.

In response to these data and a mandate from the Michigan State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction convened a Statewide Coordinating Committee to analyze the status of literacy services in Michigan and develop a strategy to reduce illiteracy. In 1985, the committee recommended a five-year plan of action to reduce the number of functionally illiterate adults in Michigan by 400,000 or 50 percent.

Strategies included:

- Raising public awareness of the scope of illiteracy;
- Developing comprehensive local literacy programs involving agencies and organizations concerned with or affected by illiteracy;
- Training and expanding support services to an additional 3,000 volunteer tutors.

Many activities were launched as a result of this effort: Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs increased from 90 to 112; local literacy coalitions increased from 25 to 49; new methodologies of instruction were designed and training of volunteers conducted; and a statewide volunteer coordinating agency, Michigan Literacy, Inc., established an office to provide resource and training coordination and services.

Yet, something was missing from the initiative: it was out of the policy mainstream. Literacy was viewed by most as a problem for the education system to deal with. Other state agencies were not closely involved, and the private sector and business community were not involved.

In February 1987, Governor Blanchard created the Governor's Cabinet Council on Human Investment (GCCHI), composed of the directors of the departments of Human Services, Education, Treasury, Labor, Commerce, and the Director and Chairperson of the Governor's Office for Job Training and the Michigan Job Training Coordinating Council. Among other duties, the Governor charged the Cabinet Council to:

- Identify and evaluate all existing, pending, and proposed state and federal human investment programs...;
- Formulate and coordinate a comprehensive strategy for the education, training and

retraining of Michigan workers to best prepare them to win the jobs of the future;

- Recommend to the Governor new policies, projects, and programs...for improving the education, training, and retraining of Michigan's present and future workforce;

- Work closely with the private sector to ensure that state human investment strategies meet the needs of those who will provide the jobs of the future, Michigan's employers.

In the Academy application, Governor Blanchard stressed:

> Our greatest challenge for the future is to improve the skills of our people. The states can no longer focus only on inputs – increasing spending on a given program or increasing the number of people served by a program. We must focus on the results of these efforts – the outputs – and be willing to define and defend a given level of performance.

Two themes consistently guided Michigan throughout the Academy – accountability and business/employer involvement.

Academy I: Struggles and Success

The Director of the Governor's Cabinet Council on Human Investment chaired Michigan's Academy team. The team broadly represented literacy stakeholders: Departments of Education and Labor, JTPA, Statewide Literacy Coordinator, as well as three members of the Michigan Legislature who served on education or appropriations committees. There was no employer representative on the team at Academy I.

The team recognized the strong ties between literacy and Michigan's future economic success. The team developed a strong policy document.

- *Problem statement*:

  The brainpower, skills, motivation, and flexibility of our workforce is Michigan's competitive edge in the new world economy.

  In this rapidly changing world economy, far too many of Michigan's people lack the basic skills, the training, the adaptability to win the quality jobs of the next century. One million people in Michigan need to acquire or improve skills in order to compete for new and existing jobs and stimulate markets for job growth.

- *Policy goal*:

  The state of Michigan is committed to helping its people master the new realities of economic change. Resources must be focused to offer at least one million people the opportunity to acquire or improve minimum basic skills needed to win the jobs of tomorrow.

- *Policy objectives*:

  - The State of Michigan will by 1990 improve the workforce literacy skills of 500,000 adults and of at least 1,000,000 adults by the next decade, as measured on a continuum of skills, to meet current and predicted Michigan occupational needs.

  - The State of Michigan will accelerate change by employing state government influence and by leveraging public investment in the private sector to encourage employers by 1990 to: 1) assess workforce literacy skills of their current employees; 2) conduct job analysis/needs assessment of skills needed for current and future occupations; and 3) provide or make available remediation services to all currently employed workers.

  - By 1988, the State of Michigan, working closely with the private sector, will identify the number and kinds of jobs that will be available in the 1990s and

beyond; will identify the minimum skills required for those jobs along a continuum; and will match those skills with a measurement standard to allow public and private literacy efforts to define outcomes, set goals, and measure progress.

- By 1988, the State of Michigan will begin to move funding of the wide spectrum of basic skills efforts towards an outcome oriented, performance-based system that encourages innovation, creativity, and efficiency among a variety of service providers and pays for results.
- ...by the year 2000 every Michigan adult (will have) accessibility to an appropriate continuum of literacy services relevant to the occupational needs of Michigan.

The team also listed in the policy document several strategies it would pursue in the interim to achieve its objectives. After four days of long and focused team work sessions, the team had a clear direction and the basic framework for the state's workforce literacy effort. However, it still was uncertain how to strengthen direct employer involvement in the literacy initiative.

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

In mid-summer IBM initiated a meeting with the Governor's Cabinet Council on Human Investment. IBM proposed a partnership between Michigan state government and IBM to develop a comprehensive, data-based, statewide literacy plan. In early September 1987, Governor Blanchard announced that the State of Michigan and IBM had "teamed up to fight illiteracy." The effort involved state government using IBM's Application Transfer Study (ATS), a planning tool used nationally by IBM to assist large corporations and organizations in developing strategies to address different problems.

The Academy team was expanded to serve as the steering committee for the IBM partnership project. The work the team completed at Academy I was to be incorporated into the comprehensive plan, which would include a definition of literacy, a description of existing programs and resources, a proposed outcome-based evaluation process, and implementation strategies. The team conducted a comprehensive set of interviews (over 150 consumers, policymakers, employers, researchers, and service providers), studied the literature on workforce literacy, and drew heavily on the works of Academy faculty.

The initial planning session took place in late August with the Cabinet Council and staff, Academy team members, and IBM personnel. As a part of the project, IBM pledged two days a week of staff time free of charge to the state. The planning was on a fast track. The team expected to bring a draft with them to Academy II in mid-December.

The Cabinet Council also started work on a second, related initiative. The Governor's Commission on Jobs and Economic Development, co-chaired by Lee Iacocca and Douglas Fraser, recommended to the Cabinet Council on Human Investment that a common instrument was needed to assess the level of an individual's work readiness. This instrument could be used both to assess individual progress in a literacy or training program and to evaluate the performance of the program. The Commission further recommended that representatives of business and industry should have a principal role in determining the standards used with such an instrument and in building a consensus for statewide adoption.

Accordingly, the Governor requested Peter Pestillo, Vice-President of Ford Motor Company, to chair a statewide task force to develop these standards. The task force, consisting of chief executive officers and other high level officials from business and industry, as well as representatives from organized labor and education sectors, began work in October. While the task forces developed recommenda-

tions on academic and employability competencies needed by the future workforce, the GCCHI began working with the Department of Education to develop a companion measurement instrument.

In a third but related area, staff from the GCCHI began development of a private/public partnership project on illiteracy prevention. The project was designed to work with employment and training applicants who had children under five. At the same time these parents improved their basic skills, they learned ways in which to work with their young children to increase the children's literacy potential. Their children were connected with services and programs that would enhance their learning ability and better prepare them for school.

By the end of the interim period, it was obvious that Michigan's strategy to involve the business sector in addressing the literacy problem was working. The only pitfall the team encountered was having to back-track a bit for the expanded team while at the same time speed up the planning schedule.

Academy II: Results and Rewards

The Academy team, expanded to include two staff from IBM, arrived at Academy II exhausted, but with a draft policy document in hand. The plan expanded and further specified the Academy I product and made an even stronger connection between literacy and employment:

- **The Situation:** Like many old industrial states, Michigan's workforce is a workforce of the past, of the last industrial revolution. There have been dramatic advances in the last five years, but the cultural inertia is still great – so great, in fact, that thousands of Michigan children drop out of high school each year in the firm belief that they'll still be able to get a good job "at the plant" – even at the very time that their fathers, their uncles, their brothers and their sisters have been laid off and, in some cases, the plant has been closed for several years.

- **The Goal:** Upgrading the education and skill levels of the state's current and future workforce to close the gap between prevailing skill levels and the competencies that will be required by 1995 to position Michigan, once again, at the industrial frontier.

In the interim, the team had also grappled with the issue of targeting literacy initiatives to specific population groups. They concluded that, for Michigan, targeting was not the issue. The state already had a large service delivery system for literacy. The issue was not expansion of services, or setting priorities for delivery of services, but on changing the way in which services were delivered and the provider's accountability for outcomes: "If the workforce of the future is to be created in Michigan, the state will have to establish the environment for creating it."

In order to create an accountable system of literacy providers, state literacy policymakers needed "to understand in detail the needs of the individuals within target groups along the continuum of work readiness skills...and create or restructure training and education programs to assure that they are relevant to current marketplace demands..."

The Michigan team chose to spend its work time detailing an implementation plan for the accountability component of its overall literacy plan. They set a policy objective for accountability:

Create an accountability system that will apply fiscal, programmatic, and related standards appropriate to each program in such a way that progress along the work-readiness continuum can be tracked and programs can be enhanced or revised, as necessary, to achieve established objectives.

Action steps included:

- Using the competencies developed by the employer task force in collaboration with the GCCHI, develop a test to measure workforce competency by June 1988.
- Using the test, conduct, on a sample basis, a baseline study of workforce competencies of Michigan's existing labor force by February 1989.
- By February 1989 establish common, system-wide outcome reporting requirements.
- By February 1989, require appropriate education and employment training agencies to administer pre- and post- workforce competency tests on a continuing basis to all their clients.
- By September 1989, establish a uniform set of standards to measure outcomes and ensure an attractive return on investment.

By November 1989, the team expected to evaluate program effectiveness in terms of outcomes and customer satisfaction results, to issue a report card to education and employment and training agencies evaluating their progress on workforce competence, and to disseminate this information to the public. By March 1990, the team planned to review funding allocations of education and employment training agencies based upon outcomes and reallocate funds as appropriate.

When the team returned to Michigan, it expected to develop or plan for:

- A standard work-readiness definition of literacy to guide and drive all education and employment programs;
- A comprehensive skill-building system for the delivery of education and training services, which is market-driven, accessible to the user, facilitates user choice, and is evaluated and modified based upon measured performance;
- A data system for assessing the skill levels and needs of individuals who enter the training and education system and the outcomes achieved through service delivery;
- A delivery system for training and technical assistance to service providers;
- A Michigan Human Resource Development Research Institute to serve as the locus for research and evaluation of work-readiness enhancement programs (publicly chartered, privately operated, and jointly funded by the public and private sectors).

The state of Michigan had a huge task. It had not only moved literacy into the policy mainstream, but it set a course of systemic change through increased accountability. This course would inevitably challenge traditional methods of connecting individuals with literacy training. It also required the establishment and testing of new data systems ranging from individual measurement through provider performance to policy accountability. Fortunately, the GCCHI had been able to muster the resources, with the help of the private sector, to design this comprehensive and innovative approach. Would the state be able to implement the design?

Implementation: Woes and Winners

Upon returning from Academy II, the literacy team completed its draft report. *Countdown 2000: Michigan's Action Plan for a Competitive Workforce*, stressed five underlying principles. To accomplish Michigan's policy goals, all strategies must:

- Meet the work-readiness needs of employers and be sensitive to the personal needs and barriers faced by individuals they serve;

- Reflect the shared responsibility of the stakeholders – government, employers, and employees;

- Empower individuals to invest in themselves; permit people to choose the education and training course that best fits their needs and provides them with the wherewithal to pursue those needs;

- Ensure a "user-friendly" education and training system easily accessible to workers and employers;

- Ensure accountability within the education and training system; stakeholders must know what programs achieve, not simply how many people they serve.

The *Countdown 2000* report was unveiled by Governor Blanchard in his January 20, 1988, State-of-the-State address. It contained eight major recommendations:

1. Adoption statewide of a new "workforce literacy" definition to drive all adult training and education programs. This new definition recognizes five skill bands:
   - language/communication skills
   - quantitative skills
   - problem-solving skills
   - interpersonal/attitudinal skills
   - job seeking/self-advancement skills

   Each skill must be viewed as a continuum. How fully developed each skill must be will be determined by the work situation. How fully developed they can be is up to each individual.
2. Establishment of a public/private policy board to oversee the design and implementation of an integrated, outcome-oriented system.
3. Simplified access to the education and training system through "service accounts" that individuals can draw upon for training and education.
4. Development of a standard assessment, using the new definition, for each participant in training and education programs.
5. Joint investment of the public and private sector in the system through the encouragement of unlimited partnerships and the creation of a wide array of incentives for such partnerships.
6. Creation of a Human Resources Research and Development Institute, a public/private joint venture to perform research, evaluate programs, and develop curricula and materials.
7. Training and technical assistance for adult training and educational providers, with emphasis on designing and delivering programs that meet the new workforce literacy definition.
8. A public information/marketing campaign from the highest level of government, promoting a new workforce training and education system based on individual choice, lifelong learning, and accountability.

Implementation of these eight recommendations rested on two key components: the Michigan Opportunity Card and the Michigan Human Investment Fund.

- **The Michigan Opportunity Card**: A wallet-sized, plastic credit card, the Michigan Opportunity Card will be available to all adults. The card will provide access to all job training and educational services. Coded with a magnetic strip like a bank card, it will quickly access information through a computer network. Services available to all adult cardholders will include:
  - skill assessment;
  - information on training and educational programs available in the community;
  - a personal action plan for the cardholder to upgrade skills;

- referral to available training and educational programs;
- job placement assistance;
- a "skills account" for those with skills below the minimum level needed to get a job. A basic skills account will be offered, funded by the state and based on skill need, not financial need.

The cardholder will decide where to go for the services described in his/her personal plan of action, choosing from the array of services offered in the community.

The team envisioned the Michigan Opportunity Card as a driving force to integrate existing programs, weed out ineffective programs, and coordinate the development of future programs. The card also signals a fundamental shift in public attitude by recognizing an individual's rights and responsibilities in pursuing lifelong education and training consistent with the realities of the modern economy.

- **The Michigan Human Investment Fund**: The Fund is a joint venture between the private sector and the state departments and agencies that are involved in adult training and educational programs. The members of the Fund form a board of directors to oversee and coordinate management of the entire human investment system. The board will ensure the card system operates smoothly and easily for the user and is accountable for results to the consumer and the funders, public and private, individual and institutional.

Consistent with *Countdown 2000*'s eighth recommendation, on April 21, 1988, Governor Blanchard held a news conference in Washington, D.C., announcing nationally the *Countdown 2000* report and the Michigan Opportunity Card. The following day he released the *Michigan Employability Profile*, the task force report recommended by the Iacocca/Fraser Commission. The *Profile* report gave credence to the new workforce literacy definition and supported the innovative direction of *Countdown 2000*.

Implementation activities are in full swing as of June, 1988.

Technological planning and development is proceeding; the legislature is being briefed; a procurement process for the database has been initiated. The Human Investment Fund has been established by Executive Order. Legislation is being designed to fund portions of the new human investment system. The assessment instrument, an employability skills test, is in the design phase.

The plan calls for a phase-in of seven years for the entire human investment system.

Final Results

In 1984, when Michigan began policy work on literacy, it was an education issue. By 1988, literacy had become the major economic development issue in the state. The Academy process helped Michigan create *Countdown 2000*, by providing critical information at the right time and by offering a process which ensured coordination and continuity of effort by all stakeholders.

THE STATE OF MISSOURI

The Groundwork

Governor John Ashcroft was lead Governor for the CSPA State Policy Academy. As the head of the National Governor's Association Task Force on Literacy, Governor Ashcroft spearheaded action on this issue. The work of the Missouri Academy team is a prime example of interagency, public/private collaborative policy development.

The team described Missouri's literacy problem before they arrived at Academy I:

> Missouri's economy has a shrinking agricultural sector, a manufacturing sector in transition, and growing tourist and service-based industries. The dynamics of these changes result in displaced workers and a mismatch between the jobs that are available and people with the skills to fill them....
>
> Estimates indicate that among AFDC recipients, 56 percent of the parents do not have a high school diploma. Assuming a correlation between the high school dropout rate and illiteracy, from 400,000 to 500,000 Missourians over the age of 16 and not in school do not have a high school diploma. Furthermore, it has been estimated that 400,000 Missourians 20 years of age and older lack the basic skills to read, write, compute and otherwise function in the workforce.

Governor Ashcroft and his agency heads proposed several initiatives to address this problem:

- **Learnfare/Welfare to Work:** This initiative addressed four major goals: (1) boost the educational level of AFDC parents who lack high school diplomas; (2) open new job opportunities for AFDC parents through participation in job skills, job search, job experience, and job placement programs; (3) attack long-term welfare dependency by facilitating the transition from welfare to work; (4) foster individual initiative and the desire for self-sufficiency by providing adequate support services.

- **Establishment of a literacy foundation:** Southwestern Bell Telephone Company had supported a study of Missouri's literacy problem that recommended the establishment of a foundation to serve as a long-term, professional "forum for literacy's many voices to act together." The Foundation was to offer a means to stimulate and support innovative ideas in the field, reduce duplication of effort and competition for scarce resources, enhance existing programs, and fill gaps in services in the state.

- **The Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy:** Understanding the importance of private sector involvement in literacy improvement, the Governor established an advisory council on literacy with members from large and small Missouri corporations, community colleges, news organizations, philanthropic organizations, libraries, and local and state government units.

The Governor's Office was looking for a collaborative process which would unite the public and private sectors in solving Missouri's literacy problem. They hoped the Academy process would do just that. The Governor's senior policy analyst for education chaired the

Academy team, which had representatives from the Departments of Education, Labor and Industrial Relations, Social Services, Corrections and Human Resources, and Economic Development (Division of Job Development and Training), the State Library, and the Missouri Coalition for Adult Literacy. But most importantly, on the team was a Division Manager from Southwestern Bell. Private sector representation on the team was a critical ingredient in Missouri's success.

Academy I: Struggles and Success

Although the Governor had already proposed several specific initiatives, the team approached Academy I with a broad frame of reference. The team struggled during early work sessions to gain a focus for the state's literacy effort. Emphasizing workforce literacy was important, but broad-based literacy improvement was critical as well – to prevent dependency, to improve educational outcomes for at-risk students, and to strengthen citizen participation. However, the state had limited resources; the team needed to narrow its focus and target resources.

Academy sessions on defining literacy as a functional continuum and on choosing target groups were useful to the team in gaining focus. By the end of Academy I, the team had focused its policy goal:

Missouri is committed to providing opportunities for its citizens to experience healthy, happy, literate, and productive lives. This commitment extends to:

- Those not in the workforce: providing basic skills training and job training to allow Missourians to obtain productive employment and adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. This includes AFDC payees, displaced workers, high school dropouts, and persons incarcerated and under the supervision of the criminal justice system – many of whom lack skills and access to the workforce.
- Those in the workforce: pooling federal, state, local, and private resources to help working individuals upgrade their skills to meet changing demands of the workplace.

They also developed measurable objectives and a list of strategies for each section of the policy goal:

- By 1995, Missouri public schools will increase the persistence to graduation rate by 6 percent (from 74 percent to 80 percent).
- By 1992, Missouri will increase the number of non-working people who receive basic skills training and job training by 200,000. These include:
  - AFDC payees
  - displaced workers
  - high school dropouts not in the workforce
  - persons incarcerated and under the supervision of the criminal justice system
- By 1989, Missouri will ensure training opportunities in at least 25 sites for individuals in the workforce where such training is not being provided, in order to maintain and/or upgrade employment.

The team produced a list of strategies with clearly identified roles for the Governor, his Cabinet Council on Education, the Missouri Coalition for Adult Literacy, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and business and industry. Among specific strategies were the following:

- Department of Education implement a Plan for the Advancement of Literacy by 1989 including 1) expanded emphasis on early childhood education, preschool screening, and diagnosis; 2) the establishment of ten model programs providing remediation to 8th grade and above at-risk students in ten school locations; and 3) implementation of the core competencies and key skills cur-

riculum in all grade levels coupled with a statewide criterion-referenced testing program designed to measure student progress;

- Enact and implement the Learnfare/Welfare-to-work legislation to assist AFDC payees to become trained and employed;
- Explore the feasibility of paying training subsidies or offering tax credits to employers who provide upgrading of basic skills to current employees as well as displaced workers;
- Create 25 new alliances among state government, business, labor, and higher education to provide job training programs that enable workers to adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Half of these will include businesses with fewer than 300 employees.

Although the state's literacy initiative remained broad, the team had specified three major directions: illiteracy prevention through education system improvements; functional literacy gains for dependent populations; and workplace literacy.

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

The Missouri team met three times in the interim. Because Governor Ashcroft personally assumed leadership of the literacy initiative in the state, the team acted immediately to secure his approval of the work they completed at Academy I. The Governor decided to appoint a Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy, which would formalize the developmental work of the Academy team.

As with any government-wide policy initiative a major challenge was to define the roles of the separate agencies and a mechanism to coordinate the activities among the agencies.

The team requested interim assistance from a national literacy expert currently on assignment in the literacy office of the U.S. Department of Education. The team planned an all-day session to discuss administrative and structural options for the implementation of the state literacy policy. They hoped to answer such questions as:

- How can the various state agencies collaborate together and with volunteer groups and the private sector in implementing literacy policies?
- How can the state best identify the resources necessary for implementation and target them for maximum effectiveness?

As the team prepared for Academy II, they hoped to further address these issues.

Academy II: Results and Rewards

For the Missouri team, persistence paid off. Continuing to develop its three-pronged approach to literacy, the team reiterated one prevention objective, which focused primarily on education, and two intervention objectives, which focused on employment and training.

Academy team membership expanded to include the Secretary of State, who was to be appointed to the Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy. By continuing to discuss the appropriate roles and responsibilities for implementing the plan, the team was able resolve many potential turf battles. The employer representative and the representative from the Missouri Coalition for Adult Literacy, who did not have state agency turf to protect, played a key role in encouraging both persistence and collaboration within the team.

During Academy II, the team developed strategies for the two intervention objectives. The first addressed the needs of current workers.

> By 1989, Missouri will ensure basic education skills training for 250 individuals in at least 25 sites where such

> training is not now being provided in order to maintain and/or upgrade employment. The sites will serve agribusiness, manufacturing, and service industries.

The draft plan called for the Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy to work with the Department of Economic Development to identify at least 40 potential training sites where workers would receive basic skills education/training that would enable them to adapt to the changing demand of the workplace. The process of identification would be based on an employer survey supported by seven regional workshops conducted by the Department of Economic Development which would teach employers how to identify literacy needs in their firms.

Once the 40 sites were identified, the Department of Economic Development would work with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to choose 25 sites to pilot employment and training programs. Criteria for selection would be developed cooperatively with the community college system and the Advisory Council on Literacy.

> The second intervention strategy addressed the needs of non-workers. By 1992, Missouri will enhance the employability of 200,000 non-working Missourians through the provision of basic skills and/or job training. The targeted groups include AFDC payees, displaced workers, high school dropouts not in the workforce, and persons incarcerated and under the supervision of the criminal justice system.

Several strategies supported this objective, including:

- Exploration by the Department of Economic Development of incentives (such as training subsidies or tax credits) to employers to provide skills training to upgrade basic skills of current employees or displaced workers.
- Implementation by the Department of Social Services of a statewide "Learnfare/Welfare to Work" program that would enable AFDC payees through education and training to make the transition from welfare dependency to employment.
- Improvements by the Department of Corrections in the vocational and academic education programming in its facilities, including materials and equipment.
- Regulations made by the Board of Probation and Parole to tie achievement in basic skills training to community release decisions for prisoners.
- A continuing education program, developed cooperatively by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the State University system, to train providers of literacy services in teaching portable, functional skills relevant to the changing workplace.

Finally, the team recommended several general strategies in the draft document which spelled out implementation roles and responsibilities:

- The Governor will direct his Cabinet Council on Education to submit on or before June 30, 1988, an initial plan for the more effective use of all resources currently available for literacy and basic education skills training, e.g. JTPA, ABE, Wagner-Peyser, Carl Perkins, Vocational-Education and Library Services and Construction Act monies.
- By January 1988, the Governor will direct the appropriate state department directors to work with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop and supply information for a comprehensive database that will identify the number of individuals within the targeted groups, their locations, their characteristics, and their needs so that prescriptive programming

can be initiated. This database shall become operational no later than September 1988.

- By January 1989, the Governor's Advisory Council will initiate a public information campaign informing agencies, business, labor, and the general public of the opportunities for basic education/skills training in the state.

- The Missouri Coalition for Adult Literacy, in addition to coordinating literacy awareness activities and information dissemination, will facilitate the development of a literacy foundation to fund innovative activities to complement/supplement existing programs.

- The Governor will convene an annual Governor's Conference on Literacy, in association with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to "bring together and actively involve both the private and public sectors of the state in enhancing literacy and job productivity for Missourians."

- By 1990, the Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy will conclude a study of the use of vouchers and other approaches to 1) stimulate the development of quality literacy programs; 2) diversify providers; and 3) increase program choices for adult learners.

- The Office of the Governor will create a special accountability task force charged with developing the tools to evaluate the effectiveness of the literacy policy and action plan. Such an evaluation would include assessing 1) progress against the plan; 2) the level of service to individuals; and 3) program effectiveness as measured by pre- and post- training functional literacy tests.

The Missouri team left Academy II with a literacy policy and a two-year action plan defining roles and responsibilities. While the accountability component of the plan was not fully developed, the team had committed to an accountability process.

Implementation: Woes and Winners

As of June 1988, Missouri had begun implementation of all but one of the major strategies recommended by the Academy team. Most notable is the establishment of the literacy foundation, "Literacy Investment for Tomorrow - Missouri" (or "LIFT - Missouri"). The Board of Directors of the foundation began funding innovative projects in December 1988.

The Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy has not yet completed its work but has met several times under the chairmanship of Secretary of State, Roy Blunt. In fall 1988, Academy Team members formally presented a draft plan and facilitated the work of the Council.

Individual agencies are pursuing projects outlined in the plan, such as the model projects for at-risk youth to increase graduation rates and the learnfare demonstration sites. Of the approximately 20 action steps outlined by the Academy team to be implemented in 1988-89, 14 are complete or underway.

Final Results

The Governor expects the final recommendations of the Advisory Council on Literacy in late fall, 1988. Once approved by the Governor, the policy will serve as the blueprint for statewide actions in literacy, and the implementation of its provisions will be officially tracked. These recommendations will reflect the hard work of the Academy team: uncovering the facts about literacy in Missouri; forging public and private collaboration; and securing interagency agreement on roles and responsibilities. The Academy team built a consensus, which has become the foundation of the Council's recommendations. Meanwhile, state agencies have already begun implementation of key strategies.

When asked about the usefulness of the Academy process to Missouri, one team member responded: "The Governor's Office had

ideas about what we wanted to do before the Academy. The process legitimized these ideas and gained the commitment and involvement of others. It also laid the groundwork for the Governor's Advisory Council. We might have fulfilled the letter of the policy document without the Academy; with it, we will fulfill the spirit of the document as well."

THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

The Groundwork

The state of North Carolina was committed to improving the coordination and effectiveness of its literacy programs. There were several barriers to progress. North Carolina's participation in the Academy highlights how gubernatorial leadership can promote inter-agency collaboration even in areas where his constitutional authority is weak.

Historically, North Carolina's economy has been characterized by low unemployment rates with many low-skilled, low-paid jobs in manufacturing and agriculture. The workforce in the state has been less well educated and less skilled than in most wealthier states. High school dropout and illiteracy rates have been higher in North Carolina than nationally. A successful literacy effort must confront two problems: upgrading the skills of the current workforce and meeting the long-term needs of the economy, i.e. preparing the workforce for the skill requirements of the future.

The Governor's Office saw the Academy as an opportunity to address these problems and create a process that could circumvent or overcome rivalries between major literacy stakeholders: state government agencies; the community college system, which delivers most of the adult literacy and job training programs; employers and the business community; and private non-profit literacy providers. The Governor's Office, which does not constitutionally control the community college system, proved adept at utilizing the process to accomplish this objective, focus efforts, and gain support for several new literacy efforts.

Governor Martin had already taken several actions:

- He declared 1987 to be the "Year of the Reader" in North Carolina;
- He established the Governor's Commission on Literacy and appointed the immediate past president of the University of North Carolina to serve as chairman and the immediate past president of Central Piedmont Community College to serve as executive director.

  The Commission included heavy representation from the education community because they controlled most of the resources for improving workforce skills.

The Governor charged the Commission and its staff to "develop a strategic plan and implementation strategy for enhancing adult literacy." He wanted the Commissions's recommendations to be included in his budgetary and legislative program for the short session of the General Assembly in January 1988. Specifically, he asked the Commission to:

- Identify and assess literacy activities occurring in the state;
- Identify those groups in need of literacy services;
- Recommend how best to serve the needs of those with low literacy and basic skill levels.

The Governor's office viewed the Academy team as staff to the Commission: to offer recommendations, serve as a sounding board for proposals, and assist in the preparation of the final report. In particular, the team wished to learn about exemplary implementation strategies from other states. The application stated that the executive director and staff of the Commission were looking for "a quick approach to getting at the bottom line of the literacy issue without worrying about the form, to identify viable policy alternatives...and to find an approach for a 'hands-on' session in strategic thinking for the Commission itself."

North Carolina's team included the executive director of the Governor's Commission on Literacy, the Governor's senior education advisor, the director of the Division of Employment and Training Development, and staff from the Division of Policy and Planning.

Academy I: Struggles and Success

The process of Academy I was difficult for the North Carolina team. Only one of the team's five members was a member of the Governor's Commission. The team leader, executive director of the Commission, was not certain that his involvement in the Academy project would benefit his work with the Commission. Academy I content stressed jobs and productivity as outcomes for literacy initiatives, yet the North Carolina initiative had to focus on educational as well as economic development outcomes.

For these reasons, Academy I did not prove as useful in building collaboration as the North Carolina team had hoped. Nevertheless, by the end of Academy I, the team had developed a draft policy document, which it felt would be useful to the Commission.

The team's goal stated that:

North Carolina is committed to helping all citizens join in strengthening the state's economy. In order to do so, North Carolina will focus the resources of business and industry, volunteer organizations and public agencies to provide literacy and basic skills training for the segments of its population requiring assistance:

- youth at-risk of not successfully completing high school
- high-school dropouts
- working poor
- displaced or dislocated workers
- under-skilled workers

Policy objectives included:

- Increasing the average rate of student retention;
- Creating new joint ventures between business/industry and service providers to offer literacy and basic skills training that will enable under-skilled workers to adapt to the changing demands of the workforce;
- Implementing measures of success for literacy and basic skills programs;
- Devising a plan to serve illiterate individuals living in rural areas of high unemployment;
- Offering literacy training to those individuals seeking to improve their life skills and citizenship skills.

Each objective had a target date and desired outcome and several suggested strategies.

Several questions faced the North Carolina team as they returned home from Academy I:

- How were the recommendations of the team going to be integrated with the work of the Commission?
- How could the team, as staff to the Commission, support the collaborative effort that would be necessary for planning and implementing new literacy initiatives?

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

During the summer, the Academy team members revised the state team product and presented to the Commission chair a process for fulfilling its charge. They offered staffing assistance to the Commission and suggested several content areas for sub-committee study including:

- Outreach and referral to specific target groups;
- Expansion of the variety, effectiveness, and adaptability of literacy programs;
- Improvement in the performance of existing programs, including high school dropout prevention programs;
- Examination of the role of literacy in the workplace, forging better links between improvement in literacy and opportunities for career advancement;
- Enhancing the role of literacy in the home and the community.

The Commission decided to pull in several constituencies by organizing into four focus groups:

1. The role of the private sector. The Commission worked with the pre-existing Governor's Business Education Committee.
2. The relationship between dropout prevention and adult literacy development. The pre-existing Task Force on Youth At Risk worked with the Commission in this area.
3. Inter-agency coordination. State agency heads met once to ensure the Commission understood the issues involved in promoting greater coordination.
4. The needs of service provider organizations and their clients. A group representing adult basic education, volunteer literacy councils, private non-profit literacy programs, state agency literacy programs, and an urban coalition met often and drafted recommendations to the Commission.

The Commission and the Department of Community Colleges jointly sponsored a survey of literacy providers and program participants. The Commission contracted with the State Office of Budget and Management to analyze the 1980 census data and to estimate, at the county level, the percentage of persons likely to be deficient in basic skills.

Progress was steady, but slow. By late fall 1987, the Commission's focus groups had begun work. Hoping for a product by January, the Governor's Office felt the timing of Academy II (December 1987) was in conflict with the Commission's workplan. Also, they faced shortages in of out-of-state travel funds. Several weeks prior to Academy II, the Governor's Office decided not to attend the second Academy meeting.

Further Progress

In May 1988, the Governor's Commission on Literacy released its draft recommendations. Three major steps were proposed:

1. Creation of a North Carolina Advisory Council on Literacy. The Council should have 22 members appointed by the Governor to represent the Department of Community Colleges, the North Carolina

Literacy Association, business and industry, and citizens at large, as well as the president of the Community College system, the director of the North Carolina Literacy Association, the State Superintendent of Education, a state senator and a state representative.

2. Creation of a North Carolina Literacy Trust Fund that would encourage private financial contributions to the literacy effort and provide additional resources to support both public and private literacy efforts.
3. Creation of an Office of Literacy in the Department of Administration that would provide staff support to the Advisory Council and the Literacy Trust Fund.

Further, the Commission recommended that the Council:

- Map existing services and resources;
- Identify program objectives, service delivery mechanisms, numbers of persons serviced, and the nature of services;
- Identify gaps in services;
- Analyze relationships among services to identify needs for increased coordination.

The Commission suggested six policy goals for the work of the Council and the Trust Fund and offered strategies for accomplishing them.

1. Focus on the needs of adult learners with specific attention to the needs of welfare recipients, high school dropouts, dislocated workers, the working poor, the unemployed, parents of at-risk youth, and workers with limited literacy skills who are employed by small businesses;
2. Enhance literacy education in the workplace;
3. Foster cooperation and coordination among state agencies and the private sector in order to get maximum impact from existing programs;
4. Increase program effectiveness and accountability;
5. Support public education reform to prevent future adult illiteracy;
6. Facilitate programs in which parents and children can jointly enhance their literacy skills.

Based on the work of the Commission, several literacy-related budget items, totaling approximately $5 million and including a new Office of Literacy, were added to the Governor's proposed budget.

Final Results

As of June 1988, the Office of Literacy had been established.

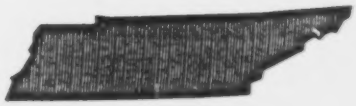
In addition, funding from several sources has been found for:

- A drop-out prevention program to provide remediation and general counseling for at-risk youth;
- Eight pilot preschool programs to serve the literacy needs of parents and children together;
- Customized literacy programs for existing small businesses provided by the community colleges;
- A "Boston Compact"-like program for at-risk youth aged 16-24;
- A basic skills enhancement program for employees of state agencies; and
- A quasi, university-based, technical assistance network and resource bank for literacy professionals, volunteers, and industry needing customized literacy programs.

The North Carolina team has reason to feel proud of its accomplishments. It had designed a process, using the Academy as a starting point,

which accomplished all of the major objectives. It had created a mechanism that would facilitate public/private collaboration; it had encouraged participation by the private sector; it had enhanced the Governor's authority in the development of literacy policy. Finally, it had redirected existing resources or found new resources for efforts that supported the dual policy objectives.

THE STATE OF TENNESSEE



The Groundwork

Like other states, Tennessee confronted a serious literacy problem, one that was growing annually. But it had few services in place to combat the problem. The team felt that Tennessee needed to take action immediately to expand public awareness and services.

Tennessee's application detailed the facts:

> At least since the 1970s, Tennessee has had a persistent high school dropout rate of approximately 30 percent. With the advent of swift technological change and concurrent increases in job expectations, there has also been a significant growth in a cohort of adult workers whose skill levels have either never equaled new job expectations or whose skill levels are falling behind...there may be as many as a 200,000 illiterate adult Tennesseans and nearly 2 million who are functionally illiterate or rapidly becoming functionally illiterate, due to changing workplace expectations.

Both youth and adult illiteracy and functional illiteracy in Tennessee have been increasing at an estimated annual rate of perhaps five to ten percent...A state-sponsored adult literacy program was started in 1985...Independent literacy coalitions had started much earlier...when it became evident that the federally funded, state administered Adult Basic Education program was not effectively reaching and serving the least educated Tennesseans.

Governor McWherter responded to this situation by setting a goal to "eliminate adult illiteracy by the year 2000." He appointed a new executive director for Adult Education. The Tennessee Literacy Coalition, an independent organization, also became active in developing overall state strategies for dealing with the literacy problem.

The new executive director led the Tennessee team throughout the Academy project. He was joined on the team by the president of the Tennessee Literacy Coalition, a representative from the Tennessee Department of Labor, and a representative from the Governor's office. The team leader approached the Academy with many specific solutions already in mind.

Academy I: Struggles and Success

During Academy I, the Tennessee team faced competing priorities. Because the team understood that literacy was "everybody's problem," they wanted to push for an interagency, collaborative approach. However, they also needed to focus on service expansion because the literacy services system was so meagre.

A sense of urgency prevailed in team meetings. The Academy process called for policy develop-

ment, yet the team leader was eager to specify strategies and make action plans. Literacy had languished at the bottom of the budget priority list for years, and the team leader felt it was time for change – time to expand effective literacy programs. The state was not interested in intellectual discussions on alternative literacy definitions, accountable service provision, or proper policy format.

Consequently, the Tennessee plan from Academy I was short on policy goals and objectives but long on specific, operational objectives. These objectives made it clear that improving literacy levels in the state was a fast-moving train – "jump on board or move out of the way". They were:

- By September 1987, the State of Tennessee changed the funding emphasis in support of local adult education programs to reflect a literacy initiative: 60 percent for literacy, 30 percent for adult basic education, and 10 percent for GED instruction.
- By December 1988, increase the number of workplace literacy programs to at least 10.
- By December 1988, recruit, retain, teach, and advance 30,000 Tennesseans from entry grade-level (0-4) to mid-range ABE programs (5-8), to GED programs, technical training programs, and/or employment.
- By December 1988, develop linkages and coordination efforts with at least six public and private social service agencies to maximize literacy services to the least educated Tennesseans.
- By December 1988, enhance public awareness of the Tennessee literacy initiative by 20 percent.
- By December 1990, establish one evening high school in four additional SMSAs.
- By December 1990, in cooperation with the Departments of Employment Security and Human Services, develop an educational enrichment program with special focus on the parents of the approximately 300,000 children and youth currently living in home environments characterized by poverty and illiteracy.

In addition to the above objectives, the Tennessee plan listed a number of strategies and creative ideas.

- Develop and implement an easily administered, reliable test for detecting learning disabilities for use by adult education programs in all 95 counties;
- Create adult education and training councils within each of the current DOE development districts with representation from social service agencies, schools and colleges, governmental and non-governmental agencies, business and industry;
- Create an adult literacy statewide coordinating committee;
- Develop full-time adult basic education programs, staffed by experienced personnel and certified adult education teachers;
- Develop, in cooperation with public and private service providers, a Tennessee Literacy Corps, a distinctive organization to recognize all literacy providers and graduates of literacy programs;
- Create a community award program and honor all communities and counties which achieve significant success in raising literacy levels.

By the end of Academy I, the Tennessee agenda for action, already well-developed prior to the Academy, had been finalized. The team leader was able to cement relationships between adult education and the state Department of Labor, the literacy coalition and the Governor's Office. The team leader was eager to return home and begin implementation.

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

By June 18, 1987, the Executive Director for Adult Education and the Tennessee Literacy Coalition began implementation of the "15 point plan." The plan had been approved by the Commissioner of Education and forwarded to the Governor who also approved it.

In addition to the objectives developed at Academy I, the plan called for:

- Full-time, year-round literacy programs in all counties, beginning with the 51 part-time programs now in place;
- Workplace literacy programs in all major businesses and industries;
- Literacy programs in inner-city housing projects and apartment complexes;
- Corps of Tennessee Tomorrow students to provide peer tutoring for other students;
- College and university-developed tutorial programs for at-risk high school students, those who have failed the proficiency tests;
- A statewide Governor's Advisory Council on Adult Education.

No firm budget request was attached to the plan. But funding was available to begin implementation in certain areas. While the team did not meet regularly during the interim, the team leader did keep in touch with the members by phone. A lot was accomplished:

- Full-time literacy programs were established in 69 counties.
- Five, 10-day university-based training programs were held for ABE teachers in group instruction techniques for literacy programs.
- A statewide training program was held for full-time, paid literacy coordinators.
- The Department of Education strengthened linkages with independent literacy organizations and it is supplying them with curriculum materials.
- September 8 was declared Tennessee Literacy Day – a big celebration took place in a rural county with the Governor speaking over statewide public T.V. hook-up.
- A major public relations literacy breakfast was planned in connection with Project Plus.

While initial actions had been very successful, several pitfalls were surfacing. Developing collaborative approaches with state agencies such as labor and social services was taking a lot of time. Furthermore, it was becoming apparent to Tennessee's team leader that a well-organized funding strategy was going to be needed to secure recent funding expansion and gain additional new funding. For example, JTPA 8% funds could be allocated several places for different purposes. Finally, to accomplish the 15 point plan would require an appropriation from the Tennessee Legislature some six to eight times larger than the current appropriation. Even with the Governor's support this might be difficult to achieve.

Academy II: Results and Rewards

The team arrived at Academy II enthusiastic about the budget increase they hoped to receive from the legislature. They organized their programmatic initiatives into an overall policy that would capture the support of the legislature.

The revised policy goal of the Tennessee policy document stated:

> Governor Ned McWherter has stated publicly on many occasions his goal to eliminate adult illiteracy by the year 2000. It is the goal of the State of Tennessee to reduce educational barriers to employment, retard the growth of illiteracy, and upgrade basic and affective

skills of the least educated Tennesseans.

The team identified seven target groups in the plan:

1. At-risk high school students;
2. Unemployed adults (including AFDC recipients);
3. Marginally employed adults (those working at minimum wage or whose continued employment is at risk);
4. Displaced workers (estimated at 1,500);
5. Employed adults needing basic skills;
6. Incarcerated youth and adults;
7. Rural, isolated adults.

The team developed a list of strategies to address the literacy needs of the above groups. The strategies encompassed three areas: prevention, workforce and workplace literacy, and agency linkages.

Prevention:

- Raise the mandatory high school completion proficiency level to tenth grade;
- Increase the high school completion (graduation) rate from 75 percent to 90 percent by strengthening existing support programs within the elementary schools and expanding peer-tutoring programs provided by the Governor's Youth Literacy Corps;

Workforce / Workplace Literacy:

- Establish an annual challenge grant competition for local literacy programs to design and implement workplace literacy programs, with at least one going to a metropolitan model and one to a rural model;
- Develop workplace literacy programs in 50 major businesses and industries, including vocational retraining programs for displaced workers with limited, non-transferable skills;
- Honor model workplace literacy sites through a statewide recognition program;
- Establish literacy programs for unemployed adults in inner-city housing projects and apartment complexes, using residents as both tutors and students;
- Provide parole or other incentives for all incarcerated youth and adults who achieve literacy and basic skills;
- Establish, through joint efforts of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Departments of Education, Labor, and Employment Security, pilot projects in rural, isolated counties to help adults develop entrepreneurial skills, within the context of a basic literacy program, that will enhance their potential to develop new, viable businesses to provide employment for themselves and their neighbors.

Agency Linkages:

- Include workforce literacy programs in the Governor's annual goals and objectives under the Job Training Partnership Act;
- Encourage Private Industry Councils wherever feasible to support local literacy programs in implementing workplace literacy projects;
- Create within each of the 14 Private Industry Councils a non-voting subcommittee representing all social service agencies, schools and colleges, governmental and non-governmental agencies, businesses and industries to coordinate a three-tiered approach to adult education focusing on 1) basic education for the unemployed; 2) basic education for the marginally employed; and 3) basic education for persons employed in stable situations but who lack basic skills.

- Work with the Tennessee Literacy Coalition to unite all independent literacy agencies and link their programs directly to state adult education programs at all levels to facilitate the upward mobility of adult students through the educational system and into gainful employment.

The Tennessee 15 point program had been transformed into a policy document whose overall objective was to increase state ABE funding for literacy by 400 percent.

The policy document firmly connected the literacy effort to jobs and economic development. The team hoped this connection would strengthen their request to the legislature and build alliances with the business community and other state agencies. The team also identified creative opportunities for interagency collaboration. For example, the Academy I draft plan called for the creation of Adult Education and Training Councils within each DOE district. The Academy II plan recommended, instead, the creation of literacy subcommittees within each existing Private Industry Council, which already functioned as a forum for education/business collaboration.

Team members recognized that firm numbers of individuals to be served were still absent from the action plan. Although outcome levels of literacy proficiency were set for each target group, the plan did not specify how these outcomes would be measured or how programs would be held accountable for outcomes.

The team returned to Tennessee with a stronger policy and action plan, which they hoped would position them for a dramatic funding increase.

Implementation: Woes and Winners

While the Tennessee team did not win its full funding request from the legislature, significant gains were made. Two additional programs brought the total of counties having full-time, year-round literacy and basic education programs to 71.

Literacy programs were developed for new consumers in new locations: workplace literacy programs for 25 major businesses and literacy programs in inner-city public housing projects. A community literacy award, the Sequoia Award, was established to honor communities making significant literacy progress.

Structural changes in the delivery and curricula of literacy programs have occurred as well. Linkages now exist between agencies and providers, creating a literacy continuum which guides adults through basic literacy attainment to functional literacy skill development, to GED preparation, technical training or job placement.

New alliances have been forged. The literacy effort now has a business support group comprised of 207 major businesses including Bell, Levi-Strauss, and GTE. GTE is sponsoring a matching program: for every 150 hours of employee time as a literacy volunteer, the company donates $1,000 to a literacy provider.

Final Results

Although dramatic state funding increases were not achieved, the Tennessee team was pleased with its accomplishments. The team fleshed out an action plan, strengthened alliances, and moved quickly to expand literacy services wherever possible. The team leader readily acknowledges that more needs to be done: public awareness of the literacy issue must continue to grow until state funding for literacy matches the needs of Tennessee's citizens; long-range planning for literacy enhancement must occur to stabilize an adequate funding base. The Executive Director of Adult Education already has ideas in mind. He is moving forward with the full support of the team backing him.

THE STATE OF UTAH

The Groundwork

The state of Utah confronted a dilemma: the literacy training needs of its population were rising, yet the state faced a budget deficit requiring cut-backs in adult education services. Although approximately 200,000 Utahns lacked high school diplomas in 1986 the state was able to serve only 11 percent of that target population. The small, but long-established adult basic education unit within the State Office of Education (headed by a state superintendent appointed by the State Board of Education) felt that without increased political visibility and more cost-effective programming its ability to meet increasing adult literacy needs would be severely impaired.

Although Utah has one of the nation's highest levels of literacy, state policymakers recognized the long-term negative impacts on the state of those with low literacy levels:

> Utahans who do not complete high school earn about two-thirds the salary of those who do. Over one-third of the mothers receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are illiterate. In addition, a great number of underemployed lack literacy skills.

Further, they recognized the special difficulties encountered in meeting literacy needs in a predominantly rural state:

> In the rural areas of the state, literacy programs for adult students are very limited and the costs of formal programs in these areas are prohibitively high because of sparse population and geographical distance.

In response to these problems, Governor Bangerter planned to establish an adult literacy commission to review the situation in Utah and recommend solutions. He appointed the Academy team, with his education policy aide as the chair. The team hoped that their participation in the Academy project would help them answer the following questions:

- Should existing and/or new educational resources be prioritized in a different way?
- Can the literacy problem be effectively addressed through education reform alone – for example, illiteracy prevention in the schools or implementation of the Utah CORE Curriculum?
- Should remediation and/or second choice opportunities be provided?
- Is Utah's economic growth and/or jobs and product competitiveness affected by this problem?
- Should there be a reassessment of delivery approaches and/or entities for dropouts and/or potential dropouts?
- Can computer-managed and technology-assisted instruction be provided to reduce the number of people without high school diplomas or literacy skills?

Academy I: Struggles and Success

While the Governor appointed a nine-person team to participate in the Academy project, the state was able to send only three individuals to Academy I because of out-of-state travel limits. Representatives from the Governor's Office, the state Department of Education, and the Office of Job Training for Economic Development

attended. Within the team, members had different levels of knowledge about literacy programs as well as varying levels of motivation to address the problem. In early sessions, team progress was slow.

In spite of these difficulties, the team produced a solid draft policy statement, excerpted below:

> Utah's economy is well balanced and diversified, but stagnant at the present time. The Governor's primary policy is to address current economic conditions by encouraging growth in existing moderate to small business and by inviting new industries into the state. In order to attract this growth, we must supply a labor force with adequate skills.

Approximately 200,000 adults lack basic skills for adequate employability, vocational entry-level job training and/or job retraining. Twenty thousand of these adult are recent immigrants with limited or no English language skills.

Policy Goals:

- To provide basic and problem-solving skills to the target population.
- To include the target populations in the economic development discussion because higher literacy will help attract business to the state.

Objectives:

- By the year 2000, 100 percent of Utah adults will complete a GED or high school equivalency program.
- By 1992, Utah will provide English as a Second Language (ESL) and other basic and problem-solving skill training to the 20,000 immigrants and help them find appropriate employment.
- By 1995, 180,000 adults who now lack adequate skills will have acquired basic and problem-solving skills and be employed.

The Utah team entitled their plan "Utah ACCESS: The Governor's Literacy Program." They formulated the following strategy:

> Establish the Governor's ACCESS Committee to 1) raise awareness of the 200,000 target adults and include them in the state's economic development dialogue; 2) develop a database of demographic and educational characteristics of the target populations; 3) develop a database of resources; and 4) define priority target groups in the context of Utah's shifting economy.

The team leader returned home confident of building momentum.

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

By late July, the Academy team, expanded to include private sector representation, had become the ACCESS team. The draft policy document was presented to both the ACCESS team and the Governor. It was well received. The ACCESS team became a steering committee coordinating the work of three governor-appointed task forces:

1. No Read-No Graduate Task Force, chaired by adult education personnel;
2. No Read-No Parole Task Force, chaired by a member of the state legislature; and
3. Literacy and Economic Development Task Force, chaired by the Office of Job Training for Economic Development.

The task forces met during the late summer and fall; progress was steady but slow. Utah had encountered a pitfall often experienced by states attempting to design and implement new policy directions. Developing new policy requires investment: top-level attention and decision-

making from all major, relevant agencies as well as sustained time commitment on the part of staff. For a variety of legitimate reasons, the state of Utah was not able to invest as heavily as it wanted to.

The team hoped to bring a finalized policy document with them to Academy II and be ready for operational planning.

Academy II: Results and Rewards

The team arrived at Academy II facing heavy odds back home. The Utah economy had not improved. Executive and legislative attention was focused on state budget problems. The team leader had changed jobs, leaving the Governor's Office for the Department of Community and Economic Development. The Governor confronted a tough re-election campaign in November 1988.

Although the team remained committed to connecting literacy to economic development, the language in the Academy II revised plan reflected the team's lowered expectations. The objectives of the plan emphasized *access* to services for the target populations, not the outcomes of increased literacy levels or employment.

The Academy II action plan outlined four steps to complete the Governor's ACCESS policy:

1. **Define and quantify the target group:** The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) was designated to provide current estimates of the numbers and demographic characteristics of the target populations, including welfare status, levels of education, age, sex, ethnicity, labor force and family status. The Department planned to enhance its information with data from Social Services, Adult Education, Community-based organizations, and the private sector.
2. **Identify, coordinate, and catalog existing resources:** DCED committed to accomplish this in cooperation with the Liaison Committee of the State Board of Education and the State Board of Regents.
3. **Implement an accountability system for literacy programs:** The Governor was to establish an ad hoc committee, with representatives of affected agencies, organizations, the client populations, and the private sector. The committee would "establish criteria and propose methods to measure the accountability of programs serving the target population. The system should address areas such as program results and cost effectiveness, best use of current accountability systems, and the concerns of the private sector."
4. **Develop the Governor's Adult Literacy Policy:** The ACCESS team sub-committee on Literacy and Economic Development accepted responsibility for the development of this document.

Although the Utah team left Academy II with reduced expectations, they had made progress on their plan. For the first time, action steps had responsible agencies and organizations assigned. This was likely to generate the staff power necessary to produce results. Furthermore, it was apparent from the language of the action plan that ownership of literacy had broadened: it was no longer "a program" located in ABE but an issue of major importance to the economic growth of Utah. The Department of Community and Economic Development had accepted a major role in addressing the literacy needs of the state. For Utah, this shift was a major success.

Implementation: Woes and Winners

Subsequent to Academy II, the new education policy aide in the Governor's Office assumed leadership of the literacy initiative. The lead role in implementation was shifted to the State Director of Adult Education, and the Department of Community and Economic Development reduced its involvement. The directions set by the Academy team influenced the development of three products:

1. **The No Read-No Graduate Committee Report.** The report presented 16 recommendations designed to strengthen reading programs at the local district level. The recommendations called for identification of model reading programs, appropriate pre-service and in-service training in teaching reading for public school teachers, mandatory reading testing for all students at least every two years, diagnostic assessments for all students that do not meet passing score requirements, remedial instruction and services for all students below the passing score, and public disclosure by school district of reading test results. The Committee also recommended establishing demonstration reading sites and/or programs and targeting special program funds to students who perform below passing score requirements. The Committee suggested the report be submitted to the Utah State Board of Education for its approval.

2. **Proposed legislation establishing a welfare-to-work program similar to California's GAIN program.** The proposed legislation coupled the continued receipt of welfare benefits with literacy education, job training, and job placement opportunities and activities.

3. **The Utah Adult Education Program Plan of 1989-1991.** The Plan incorporates several of the policy goals laid out by the Academy team and targets several high priority populations: adults with limited English language skills, adults from urban areas with high rates of unemployment, adults from rural areas, immigrant adults, and institutionalized adults.

   The Plan also states as a goal the development of a "mastery/outcome-based adult basic and adult high school curricula which utilizes computer-managed and technology-assisted instruction."

Final Results

Sometimes well-founded initiatives are overtaken by events.

This proved to be the case in Utah. The change in personnel in the Governor's Office and the shift in leadership from the Department of Community and Economic Development to the Department of Education complicated implementation of Utah ACCESS. In winter-spring 1988, a rising tax-payers revolt became a major concern of both the legislature and the Governor and sounded the death knell of a major literacy initiative.

As of June 1988, the recommendations of the No Read-No Graduate Committee Report had not yet been forwarded to the State Board of Education for approval. The draft GAIN legislation did not make it out of the legislative services office, though it may be submitted next session. For the near future at least, Utah ACCESS remains a good plan with some promising components, awaiting a more favorable political climate.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

The Groundwork

The Commonwealth of Virginia knew exactly what it wanted to accomplish through the Academy project. The Virginia Literacy Initiative was well underway, personally directed by Governor and inspired by Virginia's First Lady, Jeannie Baliles. By spring 1987, the Commonwealth had decided on an organizational structure for the literacy initiative; now it had to decide what the structure was going to do. Virginia's participation in the Academy illustrates one team's success in moving an issue from reorganization, to policy development, to implementation and institutionalization.

Literacy as well as education reform was a top priority in Governor Baliles' administration, and the Governor had already taken several actions, including the following:

- Requested and received a Cabinet-level proposal (tagged by the press as "No-Read, No-Release") that, on implementation, would provide incentives for prison inmates to improve their reading, writing, and computational skills.

- Created the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education to advise him on Virginia's educational needs leading into the 21st Century.

- Endorsed a Commission recommendation creating a "Literacy Passport" program to be implemented by spring 1988. The program would require literacy tests in reading, writing, and arithmetic for all students in grade six and would award a "Literacy Passport" to those who passed. Remediation would be provided for those who failed, and the test repeated in grades seven and eight, if necessary. Passing the test would be required for promotion to the ninth grade.

In the spring of 1987, the Governor detailed the structure for Virginia's Literacy Initiative. Two organizational entities, one state and one private, each with a strong mandate to coordinate and collaborate, would initiate literacy policy and activities.

The State Adult Literacy Committee (SALC), composed of agency representatives appointed by the Governor through the Secretary of Education, was responsible for adopting and overseeing literacy policy, hiring a State Literacy Director and coordinating state efforts with the Virginia Literacy Foundation.

The Virginia Literacy Foundation Board (VLFB), composed of literacy providers, fundraisers, prominent citizens, legislators and others was responsible for coordinating private efforts, hiring an executive director, providing grants to local groups, and coordinating with the State Literacy Committee.

Now that the structure was in place, the First Lady was impatient for action. Although she did not officially chair Virginia's Academy team, she was the point person throughout all their discussions.

Academy: Struggles and Success

The Virginia team set specific objectives for its participation in Academy I:

- Integrate the State Adult Literacy Committee (SALC) into a cohesive and informed group with a clear and definitive understanding of its task;

- Identify and delineate the singular and joint roles of the public and private segments of Virginia's literacy effort;
- Create a blueprint for an inter-agency approach to literacy, including long- and short-term objectives, time-lines, and bench-mark evaluation criteria;
- Identify federal, state, and local literacy resources.

Virginia had selected a powerful and representative team. Each member had strong opinions on the directions the literacy initiative should follow. Early team sessions consisted of lively and honest discussions. In addition, members were uncertain about exactly how the SALC and the VLFB would take leadership, divide responsibilities, and coordinate activities. Since the executive directors of the two organizations had not yet been hired, the team was aware it was making decisions that might need adjustment in the near future.

By the close of Academy I, the team had developed a strong policy document which would guide the early implementation phase of the new literacy organizational structure. The team set three policy goals:

1. Prepare a more literate, productive work force, able to meet the demands of the future;
2. Provide equal access to quality adult literacy programs to accommodate the diverse geographic regions of the state;
3. Maximize the use of all available resources to meet the needs of the target populations and ensure the continuation of the literacy initiative in Virginia.

The team identified target populations in its problem statement:

> It is estimated that 678,000 adults or approximately 22 percent of our state population do not read, write, compute, or reason well enough to function adequately in their environment, or simply do not read at all...The 678,000 persons in this target population have specialized needs and include the rural and inner city poor, single and teenage parents, prisoners, dropouts, displaced workers, young adults, older Virginians, and the underclass.

An estimated 17,500 or 3 percent of these adults were being served currently through public and private efforts. This ranked Virginia 48th of the 50 United States in the percentage of the target population being served.

Virginia's policy objectives focused on filling this service gap:

- By 1989, increase the number of persons served in adult literacy programs by more than 300 percent, from 17,500 to 60,000;
- By 1989, increase the number of persons enrolled in public and private workplace adult literacy programs by 300 percent, from approximately 600 to 1,800;
- By 1989, ensure that adult literacy services are available to all persons within one hour's drive from their residences;
- By 1989, identify the not-reached segments of the target populations and provide and implement innovative program models for them;
- By 1988, have available a system for the assessment of literacy program effectiveness;
- By January 1988, establish regional literacy committees that will plan and implement regional and local literacy strategies;
- By September 15, 1987, delineate the responsibilities, roles, and relationships between the SALC and the VLFB.

Finally, the team generated a list of strategies to accomplish their objectives. These included:

- Develop and implement a broad-based marketing plan;
- Improve adult literacy services offered by state agencies and volunteer groups;
- Expand the role of the Job Training Partnership Act in literacy services;
- Target funds for local employer/workplace literacy programs;
- Provide tax incentives and technical assistance to employers who offer workplace literacy programs;
- Regionalize literacy program offerings; use innovative delivery systems involving mobile units and video technology;
- Provide support services such as transportation and child care to literacy service consumers;
- Conduct a literacy needs assessment to identify target populations that do not have access to literacy services; analyze state- and community-based organizations that provide services other than literacy to these target groups; connect these providers with literacy services.

Although the plan did not yet specify which organizational entity would take the lead with each strategy, the team left Academy I with a commitment to establish a liaison committee composed of two members each from SALC and VLFB who would meet at least semi-annually to ensure cooperative efforts between the public and private sectors. Specific delineation of roles, responsibilities, and tasks should wait, the team felt, until the executive directors were hired.

The plan developed at Academy I was broad. It identified a large target population and implied an extensive workplan. It did not address the possibility that only limited funds might be available. For example, it did not set priorities of special populations within the target group; it did not set functional literacy levels as particular outcomes for particular target groups. However, a blueprint was in place for the new executive directors of SALC and VLFB to address as soon as they came on board.

Interim Developments: Pitfalls and Progress

During the interim, the Virginia team held a planning retreat with the newly hired executive directors of SALC and VLFB.

The Initiative made significant progress:

- The VLFB began a major fund-raising campaign and garnered significant contributions from individuals and private sector groups. Plans were developing to award grants to private literacy providers.
- SALC submitted to the Governor and legislature a budget request of approximately $4 million for the upcoming 1988-90 biennium with the objectives of expanding state agency literacy services, increasing workplace literacy programs, consolidating state literacy activities, and coordinating a statewide literacy system.
- Planning had begun on the establishment of 12 regional literacy coordinating committees across the state. The committees were to be composed of public and private literacy education leaders, providers, and support groups; their task was to facilitate, coordinate, and support effective literacy services.
- A statewide literacy conference was planned for winter of 1988.
- SALC began implementation of a two-part state employee literacy program to 1) provide literacy services to state employees who choose to improve their reading skills; and 2) train groups of committed state employees to serve as literacy tutors.

- The Initiative developed and disseminated statewide a handbook of policy guidelines for improved literacy education and programs.

The team approached Academy II with a full staff complement, ready to develop a specific two-year action plan to implement its policy.

Academy II: Results and Rewards

At Academy II, the Virginia team focused its efforts in three areas: 1) specifying priority target groups for increased literacy services; 2) integrating previously identified strategies with each target group; and 3) building an accountability system for the Initiative, which established expected outcomes of literacy services.

The final document was, in essence, a matrix of target populations, strategies, expected outcomes, and organizations responsible for implementation. One example is covered here.

In order to prepare a more literate, productive workforce, able to meet the demands of the future, the team developed the following:

> **Objective 1:** By 1989, develop new programs and expand existing literacy programs for teenage and welfare mothers under 30 years of age functioning below the high school completion level. These programs will serve at least 1,000 clients so that they may attain one or more of the following: return to school, complete their education, obtain employment, enter a job training program, or advance at least two levels in an academic or competency-based program.
>
> **Strategy A:** Develop and implement a marketing plan designed to reach teenage and welfare mothers and make them aware of the programs. (Responsibility: SALC and VLFB)
>
> **Strategy B:** Increase technical assistance to programs for teenage and welfare mothers by providing programs for curriculum development, research, materials design, instructional delivery and evaluation. (Responsibility: SALC)
>
> **Strategy C:** Provide information about support services such as child care and transportation essential to the participation of teenage and welfare mothers. (Responsibility: SALC, Virginia Department of Social Services, Virginia Department for Children, and Regional Adult Literacy Coordinating Committees)
>
> **Strategy D:** Develop Request for Proposals to provide level one basic skills training for teenage and welfare mothers under the age of 30. (Responsibility: VLFB)
>
> **Strategy E:** Mobilize and coordinate public and private resources for teenage and welfare mothers. (Responsibility: VLFB and SALC)
>
> **Strategy F:** Involve the regional literacy coordinating committees in identifying the needs of teenage and welfare mothers in their respective areas. (Responsibility: VLFB and SALC)

The team set measurable outcomes for literacy services for teenage and welfare mothers under 30 and proposed means for measurement:

- Return to school – exit interview;
- Complete GED education – GED received;
- Enter JTPA training program – completed referral to Employment and Training Services;
- Advance two levels in academic or competency-based system – pre and post test results.

The numbers of individuals served and outcomes achieved would be tracked through a statewide accountability system planned at the state level and implemented at the local level by July 1988.

The Virginia team avoided major pitfalls throughout the Academy project. Literacy Initiative leadership, from the highest levels of state government, ensured that major state agencies and the Governor's Office worked well together. The highly visible Initiative ensured ready and willing support from both the public and private sectors. Although under most circumstances "form *follows* function," the clearly defined organizational structure for literacy implementation (the VLFB and SALC) facilitated clear policy development. Finally, early on the team had set ground rules for open, honest and direct communication. This minimized the turf battles and political maneuvering that could have occurred on such a high-level team.

Implementation: Woes and Winners

By the end of July 1988, all twelve of the regional literacy coordinating committees were established and had met at least once. Several had met three or four times. The coordinating committees serve as the local focal point for all literacy activities. Their first task will be the implementation of a regional/local literacy information and referral system. The system will target as a priority ADC (welfare) recipients and teen mothers. Within six to nine months the regional committees will begin to develop regional literacy plans.

The State Office of Adult Literacy has met with all relevant state agencies regarding the development of a coordinated literacy information and referral system which targets priority populations such as ADC recipients, teen mothers and unemployed youth. The system will also include information and referral on necessary support services such as child care and transportation.

As of September 1, 1988, the Virginia literacy marketing campaign "hit the streets." Public service announcements (PSAs) were targeted to regions and particular client populations. For example, demographic analysis showed that a large number of ADC recipients and teen mothers reside in Richmond and Norfolk. PSAs in the Richmond/Norfolk area will focus on these target groups. As a whole the state has been divided into four areas for marketing purposes: northern Virginia, Richmond, Tidewater, and southwest Virginia (rural).

Several literacy programs have been piloted which target special populations. JTPA funds ($100,000) are supporting three programs that serve ADC recipients and unemployed youth, ages 17-24. These projects will be replicated upon successful completion.

The most impressive achievement, however, is the state increase in funding levels for literacy programs. For the 1988-1990 biennium, the state appropriated $4.25 million. This contrasts with state general fund appropriation for the previous biennium of $40,000. Providers are required to spend federal allocations first, but the relationship of state to federal funds for local providers has changed dramatically – from almost 0 percent state to 100 percent federal to 51 percent state to 49 percent federal. This shift ensures that state literacy policy will become the driving force in the implementation of local literacy programs.

The legislature did stipulate that the new money go directly to local ABE programs. However, the formula allocation of state funds was adjusted to reflect the numbers of ADC recipients and unemployed youth, ages 16-24, in the provider service area. This sharply increased the amount of literacy funding that went to urban areas with large low-income populations. In addition, the state has now required local providers to identify and report on target groups served and outcomes achieved.

By December 1988, the Virginia Literacy Foundation Board achieved its goal of raising $3 mil-

lion. These funds will provide support to volunteer literacy programs around the state.

Federal adult education funds will be used to provide technical assistance to local literacy providers in eight, primarily rural, regions where there is need. Technical assistance will stress improved management, curriculum design, and instruction. In addition, VLFB and state funds will jointly fund a training coordinator at the state's ABE Resource Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, who will provide training and technical assistance to private, volunteer literacy groups.

Final Results

Virginia's implementation is on a fast track. The Governor has 18 months left in his term and constitutionally cannot be re-elected. The State Adult Literacy Committee and the Virginia Literacy Foundation Board are already planning to institutionalize this successful initiative. In the works are program and curricula design changes, using a new definition of literacy based on functional competencies. Once these changes are in place, possibly by December 1988, the state will pilot performance-based contracts with literacy providers. The executive director of the State Office of Literacy envisions a statewide, performance-based system within three years.

Footnotes

1. William B. Johnson, *Workforce 2000* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hudson Institute, 1987), 115.
2. *Ibid*, xxi-xxvi.
3. *Ibid*, xix-xx.
4. *Ibid*, xvii-xviii.
5. Irwin S. Kirsch and Ann Jungeblut, *Literacy: Profiles of America's Young Adults*, Report No. 16-PL-02 (Princeton, NJ: National Assessment of Education Progress [NAEP], 1986), 3.
6. David Harman, *Illiteracy: A National Dilemma* (New York: The Cambridge Book Company, 1987), 93-94.
7. *Ibid*, 3.
8. Jack A. Brizius and Susan E. Foster, *Enhancing Adult Literacy: A Policy Guide* (Washington, D.C.: The Council of State Policy & Planning Agencies, 1987), 17-18.
9. Harman, 36.
10. Brizius and Foster, 34.
11. Harman, 38.
12. *Making America Work: Bringing Down the Barriers* (Washington, D.C.: National Governors' Association, 1987), xvii.
13. *The Bottom Line: Basic Skills in the Workplace* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Labor, 1988), 12.
14. *Ibid*, 19.
15. *Ibid*, 6.
16. Brizius and Foster, 11-42.

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